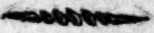


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ELLESMERE.


A NOVEL.



2987
ELLESMERE.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MRS. MEEKE,

AUTHOR OF THE ABBEY OF CLUGNY, COUNT ST. BLANCARD, &c.

R

“ Oh ! what a traitor is my Love,
“ That thus unthrones me !
“ I see the errors that I would avoid,
“ And have my reason fill, but not the use of 't.”

HOWARD.

VOL. I.

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ELLESMERE.

CHAP. I.

ON the 21st of June, 17—, a London and Oxford stage-coach, on its road from the latter to the former city, having changed horses at Watford, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, either owing to the wish of the coachman, who was very much in liquor, to display his dexterity in the management of four very spirited horses, or to the stopping of a very handsome carriage at a linen-draper's, just above the inn he was setting out from, which forced him to take a sudden sweep, the coach ran upon a post on the opposite side of the way, which occasioned its immediate overturn.

Such an accident soon assembled a great crowd. They first picked up a woman who had been thrown from the roof, and who, upon inspection, they discovered had been killed upon the spot; yet, notwithstanding the violence of her fall, an infant she had in her arms, who was asleep at the moment, had escaped totally unhurt. It was a fine boy, about nine months old, and the woman appeared to be its mother; for, upon examination, it was discovered she gave suck. The other passengers were as fortunate as the child, but none of them knew the unfortunate victim of the coachman's inebriety.— The mistress of the carriage which had, in some measure, accelerated this misfortune, had been among the first people to offer her assistance to those who might have been sufferers from the accident, and had caught the infant out of the mother's arms, giving orders for a surgeon, and to have her carried back to the inn, whither she followed her, in hopes the bystanders might have been mistaken in their prognostics; but as her benevolent intentions,

tentions, to her great regret, proved of no avail, she thought it necessary to learn who she was, and where she came from. She was, though very clean, yet meanly dressed, but the child was particularly neat; and, unconscious of the loss he had sustained, he looked about him as soon as he opened his eyes, and, as if accustomed to strangers, smiled upon his new nurse, who, inexpressibly affected by so tragical an event, wept over him, while she pressed him most affectionately to her bosom, declaring she would not part with him till he was claimed by his surviving parent, if such there was, or other relations.

The coachman was summoned to give in his report respecting the mother. All he knew was, "That she had paid her fare to London, and had been taken up at a village a few miles on this side of Oxford, having crossed the country from some place, behind a man on horseback. This was what he had learnt from his fellow-servant; and as she had paid her fare, he had made no enquiries about her name, which of course was not in

the way-bill : but he thought there was little doubt of finding out who she was, as the other coachman could easily make the enquiry where he took her up."—Her pockets and baggage were now searched, but there was nothing to lead to a discovery, either of her name, or usual place of abode—merely a few changes of clothes for herself and the child, and between seven and eight pounds in her pocket ; it was therefore presumed she was a farmer's wife going to London, to visit some relation or friend :—perhaps somebody would be waiting for her where the coach inned ; in hopes of which, Mrs. Davenport, the kind Samaritan, who had taken the helpless infant under her protection, wrote a short letter, as the best way of breaking the melancholy tidings to whomever they might concern, and gave it in charge to a very gentlemanlike looking man, one of the inside passengers, who promised to deliver it, should any person, where the coach stopped, appear to be interested in the contents. If this did not prove to be the case, the coach-

man

man was to make every necessary enquiry where the woman had mounted the roof of the stage.

Every thing being thus settled for the present, the coach proceeded on its journey, and Mrs. Davenport conveyed her young charge to Fairfield, the name of her seat, and deferred giving any orders concerning the funeral till the arrival of some of the poor woman's relations. No satisfactory, nor indeed any, intelligence was obtained through the means of the coachman—"No one was waiting the woman's arrival in London; nor did any one know either who she was, or where she came from at——." This was so very extraordinary, Mrs. Davenport sent one of her own servants to the village in question, who returned with as unsatisfactory an account as any of the former. "The woman came there behind a stout, good looking, well-dressed man, very well mounted, but who did not even stop to bait his horse; and she had ascended the roof of the coach within a quarter of an hour after her arrival."

In consequence of these repeated disappointments, orders were given for the funeral, and recourse was had to advertisements in all the town and country papers, minutely describing both woman and child, mentioning where they were taken up, and how they reached ——. Still no one appeared to claim the infant ; and the people of Watford began to hint, that whoever the child belonged to, acted wisely—" he could not be better off ; had he been sent to the parish, no doubt he would have been claimed."— This was an experiment Mrs. Davenport was not inclined to make, as she had grown so fond of him :—having no children of her own, she resolved to bring him up, and, should he continue unclaimed, to provide for him in some way, when at a proper age.

CHAP. II.

THE lady, who had so humanely taken this orphan, or abandoned infant, under her care, had not been long a resident in the vicinity of Watford, having spent the greatest part of her life in India. She was the widow of a General Officer in the Company's service, who had fallen a sacrifice to the climate of the Carnatic about three years before the commencement of this history. He died just as he had formed the resolution of revisiting his native land, leaving an honourably acquired fortune at the sole disposal of his wife, whom he had married for love ;—not that she had left England, as many young ladies do, in hopes of uniting her destiny to a rich husband ; though she was born neither in splendour nor

ELLESMERE.

affluence. Her father was a Clergyman in the north of England, who, dying when she was very young, left her and her mother in reduced circumstances. A lady of fashion in the neighbourhood, in whose house Mr. Lewis generally officiated as chaplain, humanely undertook the education of the young Frances; and, upon her mother's demise, when she was only twelve years of age, she became a constant resident at Mrs. Ravensby's seat, who had her taught every thing likely to make her prove a real acquisition to any genteel family, in quality of governess. Soon after she was turned of eighteen, a brother of her kind friend's, who had long resided in India, came over to transact some business with the Company, and mentioned to his sister his intention of taking some young person out with him, qualified to superintend the education of his daughters, requesting her to look out for a young lady of that description. She immediately recommended Miss Lewi and it was accordingly agreed, if the proposal met her

her approbation, she should return with the Governor; and when he could resolve to part with his children, they were to be sent over with her to finish their studies under Mrs. Ravensby's inspection, who agreed to remove to London when they arrived, for the benefit of the best masters. Such an arrangement could meet with no objections from the grateful Frances, who, though sorry to quit her benefactress, was greatly consoled with the idea of her proposed return; therefore, at ~~the~~ appointed time, amply provided with every requisite for such a voyage, she set sail for Bengal, where she spent three years in the Governor's house, who never failed, whenever he wrote to his sister, to thank her for having parted with her young favourite for the benefit of his daughters.—At the expiration of this period, it was decided that the young ladies should leave India the following year; and as Miss Lewis had rejected many excellent offers, from a fear of appearing ungrateful to her benefactress and the Governor, that gentleman released her from her engagement

to accompany his children to England, and spoke so highly in favour of Major Davenport, who had long been in possession of her heart, that it required but little persuasion to induce her to accompany him to the altar.— Though they had not any children, no two people enjoyed a greater share of connubial felicity.

The Major was the younger son of an ancient family, who thought they had done their duty in sending him out to India very much against his inclinations, and leaving him to rise by his merit and bravery. As he possessed both in the superlative degree, he had attained the rank of General some years before his death—no thanks to his relations: therefore the disposing of his property in favour of his excellent wife was only a just return for her exemplary conduct, and the real affection she bore him.— Having paid every respect to his memory the sincerest regret could devise, she set sail for England, determined to settle in the neighbourhood

bourhood of her first friend, with whom she had constantly corresponded, and in or near her native village; but, to her infinite sorrow, Mrs. Ravensby paid the debt of nature while she was upon her voyage. This melancholy intelligence made a great alteration in her plan; and before she formed another, she resolved to consult an only surviving distant relation of her father's, whose character Mrs. Ravensby had taught her to respect, and whom she frequently mentioned in her letters, in hopes of promoting an intimacy, which was likely to prove of infinite advantage to both parties.

Dr. Lewis, at the age of fifty, was still a bachelor. He had for many years travelled, in the capacity of governor, with various young noblemen. Having thus acquired a handsome income, and a living in Lincolnshire, but unfortunately in too low a part of that country to allow him to do the duty himself, owing to a weak constitution, he had fixed his abode in the environs of the metropolis.

polis. Mrs. Davenport paid him an early visit; their relationship rendered the formal ceremony of an introduction unnecessary, and a similarity of sentiments and disposition soon induced them to consider each other in the light of old friends.

Dr. Lewis by no means approved of her intention of residing in the north, and pointed out how infinitely more agreeably she would be situated in any pleasant village near London, as the ancient spirit of British hospitality was almost totally extinct, and she would be considered as a stranger even in her native village, which would only serve to remind her of former friends and past pleasures—ideas by no means calculated to increase her felicity. If retirement was what she sought, she might live more privately near him than in the more remote part of the island; and if she wished to select a chosen society, the neighbourhood of London would certainly afford her, far more opportunities of that kind, than she could meet with in any country place. He had been employed
many

many years in endeavouring to instruct the rising generation, but could not boast of having been very successful; therefore his present aim was to see as little of those follies (which neither his disposition nor cloth would allow him to countenance) as possible, and to do as much good as laid in his power. He then entered into a few details respecting his manner of living, which appeared so rational to Mrs. Davenport, that she earnestly requested him to take up his abode with her as soon as she was settled; alledging, by his advice, she should be enabled to make a proper use of the gifts of Fortune, without falling into either of the unjustifiable extremes of parsimony or extravagance. This idea was so flattering, that Dr. Lewis readily consented to assume the part of her domestic chaplain.

Fairfield had been advertised to be sold just before their meeting, and was immediately purchased for their future residence; but, owing to various necessary repairs, she had but just removed thither when this history commences. Her establishment
was

was formed upon a liberal, though not extravagant plan,—and a select society, to which she had been introduced by the Doctor, who daily rose in her esteem, rendered her situation truly enviable;—and though she sincerely deplored the accident which had placed the helpless infant (she had rescued from the parish) under her care, she at the same time rejoiced at the opportunity of rendering her benevolence a permanent source of delight.—Though very averse to the idea of parting with the child, still she thought it necessary to make every farther possible enquiry in the neighbourhood where she was led to suppose the unfortunate mother had resided—a task Dr. Lewis readily undertook, but could obtain no intelligence likely to answer the end of his journey; and, upon his return, it was agreed that the child should be christened—a ceremony it might not yet have undergone; but admitting it had; as there seemed no likelihood of discovering its former name, it was necessary to give it another. It was therefore carried to the parish church, and
baptized

baptized by the name of Clement Davenport, to the no small amazement, and even scandal of some of the neighbours, who almost thought it a sin in his godmother to bestow her own name upon a child of such doubtful extraction:—had she put it out to nurse, it would have been more than doing her duty by it, but to think of hiring a maid purposely to attend upon the brat, was a sure sign her thousands were lightly got;—however, they wished the child might be the better for her folly in the end.

As these strictures did not reach Mrs. Davenport's ears (nor would they have made any alteration in her plans if they had), she thought she was merely paying her debt of gratitude to Heaven for having granted her as generous a friend when in as much need of protection as the helpless child, who soon engrossed a considerable share of her affection. As he grew up, the lightness of his form, peculiar beauty of his features, and uncommon sweetness of his temper, made him

him more and more beloved by his kind benefactress: Dr. Lewis thought his infantine fallies displayed strong marks of inborn genius, and soon found great amusement in superintending the first studies of the young Clement.

Mrs. Davenport, who never recollected the untimely fate of his mother without a sigh, had strictly cautioned her household against mentioning the unfortunate incident to her godchild, who therefore supposed himself an orphan, without being sensible of the extent of his obligations to his kind godmother, who was frequently occupied in forming plans for his future advancement in life, and had once decided, if he was not claimed before that period, to send him to school when he attained his seventh year, and to India at sixteen, where she had still friends likely to assist her benevolent intentions;—but her first plan was deranged by the singular attachment both she and the Doctor felt for him; they therefore

therefore determined to undertake the task of his education between them. At a public school he would be unavoidably subjected to mortifications they were particularly anxious to shield him from ; in India, neither the obscurity nor uncertainty of his birth would impede his promotion, though it might subject him to many disagreeable reflections, in a seminary near Watford ; and Mrs. Davenport could not bear the idea of removing him to any distance.

CHAP. III.

A TRIVIAL event occurred soon after he was ten years old, which, for the first time, made him sensible of the disadvantages he laboured under. He was in a small room adjoining his bed-chamber, appropriated to his use, where he kept his kites, balls, and fishing-tackle, under the window of which a very fine peach-tree had been trained, the aspect of the wall being peculiarly favourable to such fruit, which had at this period just arrived at maturity. Mrs. Davenport having mentioned her wish to preserve them, rendered them perhaps more tempting in the eyes of her household. Be that as it may, two of the maids, little suspecting they were overlooked, came with an intent to gratify their
their

their appetite, regardless of their mistress's prohibition.

One of the footmen, who generally attended Clement when he went a fishing, was assisting him to arrange some lines at the window, which was open. Owing to their being busily employed, they stood very quiet; but hearing a little buzz below, Clement looked out, and making a sign to his companion, instantly lowered a line he had in his hand, ready prepared for angling, and caught hold of a very smart cap, and, by a sudden jerk, drew it up, and in at the window. The footman burst into a loud laugh, and Clement triumphed in the success of his exploit:—not so the offended fair one, who felt particularly angry to find herself not only detected in an act of disobedience, but exposed to the ridicule of one of her male companions. In a very peremptory strain, she demanded the restoration of her cap, threatening to prefer her complaint to Mrs. Davenport if her request was not immediately complied

complied with. Clement only laughed at her anger, telling her he could retaliate—she was gathering forbidden fruit. One word brought on another, till the damsel burst into tears of rage, and called Clement a beggar's brat—nay, a beggar's bastard for any thing she knew to the contrary, and vowed she would not put up with such treatment from any such base-born urchins. The footman retorted; and the quarrel became now so serious and loud, that Dr. Lewis and Mrs. Davenport, disturbed by the noise, came out to enquire in what it originated. An explanation was therefore obliged to take place, which proved so little favourable to the enraged Mary, though her reproaches to Clement were suppressed, as she had undertaken the part of orator, that Mrs. Davenport thought she had met with no more than her deserts. Mary had a *spirit*, and made an answer which occasioned an order for her immediate discharge.

Though Clement thus came off victorious, Mary's reproaches made a deep impression upon his mind. Mrs. Davenport remarked the unusual gloom upon his expressive countenance when he came to wish her good night. Being as fond of him as she would have been of an only son, she anxiously enquired if he was not well; then reflecting upon the before mentioned fracas, said, in a gayer tone, "I am afraid your having offended Mrs. Molly lays heavy upon your mind; she was heretofore one of your favourites."

Clement was sorry he had been the occasion of her being discharged.

"Well, if that is all that distresses you, I can easily recal my word; I will tell her, at your request, I shall overlook what she said."

Still no smiling testimony of his gratitude irradiated the face of her favourite; she even perceived tears, which he was in vain endeavouring to disperse, standing in his eyes, and his heart seemed

seemed too full for utterance. Seriously hurt, she folded him in her arms, and requested to know what had thus affected him in such soothing terms, that he burst into a violent flood of tears, and at last sobbed out Mary's reproachful epithets, and a request to know who he really was.

More provoked than she had ever been in her life, Mrs. Davenport exclaimed, "I am truly sorry it is so late; had I known this sooner, that girl should not have slept another night in my house. But be composed, my dear boy—your parents were no beggars;—an unfortunate accident deprived you of your mother; but while I live, you shall never know the want of one;—your sentiments would do honour to any station; and a good man is ever more respected than a great one. Think no more of what that creature said; I shall ever glory in my godson."

Dr. Lewis, who had been present during this scene, observed it might afford his
pupil

pupil some satisfaction to learn upon what grounds Mary had founded her base assertions. Clement's countenance shewed how much he would be gratified by the proposed communication. Mrs. Davenport, therefore, not chusing to be present during the recital, rose to leave the room; he took her hand, and once more hoped Molly would not be turned away upon his account, promising never to fish out of his window again.

“ To insult you, my dear child, in so cruel a manner, is doubly insulting me : any other offence I might have overlooked upon your intercession ; but after such a proof of the malignity of her disposition, I should deem it a crime to retain her in my service.”

She then fervently embraced the child of her adoption, and proceeded to enforce her former orders to the housekeeper.

The Doctor, meanwhile, satisfied the curiosity of the impatient Clement, softening his relation

lation by repeated assurances of his own and Mrs. Davenport's attachment; which was very much increased by the gratitude so artlessly expressed by the young listener, who, though hardly at an age to appreciate the benefit he was likely to reap from Mrs. Davenport's kind intention in his favour, was perfectly sensible of the indulgent treatment he had ever experienced from both her and the Doctor.

CHAP. IV.

SOON after this event, Mrs. Davenport took a small house in London, where she constantly spent the winter months, and frequently a week at a time during the summer, that Clement might have the instructions of the best masters in those sciences and accomplish-

accomplishments the Doctor did not conceive himself competent to teach. Thus the ensuing six years soon rolled on, and Mrs. Davenport found herself more averse than ever to part with him at the period she had decided he should go to India. If she was ill, no one was half so anxious for her recovery, nor contributed towards it so much. If she ever went out without him, he always flew to welcome her return with unaffected delight. To render her happy seemed to be his only study; and her approving smiles constituted his greatest felicity: to deprive herself, therefore, of his society, she foresaw would be to relinquish her greatest source of delight;—and as she had no relations in want of what she had to dispose of, she determined to make her favourite her heir; and, by way of giving him consequence in the neighbourhood, made no secret of her intentions; and he was so generally beloved in the small, but chosen circle of her visitors, that no one disapproved of what Clement deemed an excess of generosity. Much as he loved her, he

was very sorry she had relinquished the scheme of sending him to India, where he had hoped to rise by these talents he owed to her benevolence ; but she treated him with such uniform maternal tenderness before he was eighteen, that the most brilliant prospects of future advantage would hardly have consoled him under the idea of a separation.

About this period, she had a very severe fit of illness, which induced her seriously to think of settling her worldly concerns. She therefore, assisted by the advice of two of the first lawyers in England, made her will, leaving her beloved Clement her whole fortune, a life annuity to Dr. Lewis excepted, and a few handsome legacies to her old servants ; constituting him his own master from the moment of her death, lest even Dr. Lewis should prove a less indulgent guardian than herself, and thought herself more than repaid for all the kindness she had ever shewn him, by the unfeigned transport her unexpected recovery occasioned the
grateful

grateful youth. From that time she allowed him five hundred a year, and would have had him participate in the amusements the metropolis afforded; but her own principles, which she had early instilled into his mind, and inculcated by her example and gentle precepts, induced him to confine himself wholly to her society, and to endeavour, by every exertion of his mind or talents, to render her less sensible of her declining state of health. Thus was she rewarded for her unbounded benevolence; her medicines were doubly restorative, when administered by him; and her most frivolous wishes were sure to be anticipated: even her whims were gratified; and she expired in his arms, soon after he had entered his twentieth year, blessing him with her last breath.

Clement's regret was sincere and poignant. Her fortune by no means consoled him for what he deemed an irreparable loss: she had been his mother, his friend, and his benefactress; had rescued him not only from

poverty, but possibly saved his life; as, had he fallen into the hands of a parish nurse upon his mother's death, it was more than probable he would not have long survived her; which, indeed, had he been doomed to receive his education in a workhouse, might have proved a blessing. Reflections upon the past rendered him truly grateful for the present; and he resolved never to disgrace the memory of her to whom he owed his existence, superior education, and present brilliant fortune—for such he deemed between four and five thousand a year, not including Fairfield, furnished as it stood.

Having seen the last honours paid to her remains, he immediately complied with her request, that he would assume the name and arms of Davenport; and respectfully entreated his friendly governor would continue to reside with him, or at least to superintend his household during his absence; acknowledging to the Doctor, he felt a great wish to go the grand tour, a notion the worthy divine
greatly

greatly encouraged, observing that no one could form a proper judgment of mankind that had not visited different nations ; and he was only sorry his advanced age precluded him from the pleasure of accompanying him, but promised to procure him such letters of recommendation as would be likely to prove of real utility to him upon his tour.

Hitherto Clement, except in the single fracas with Mary, had never been exposed to any of those humiliations the lowness of his origin taught him to dread ; and Mrs. Davenport's bounty rendered him a man of real consequence in his neighbourhood. To dispose of Fairfield he would have considered as the height of ingratitude, else he would have preferred a seat at a greater distance from Watford, where he was conscious his name would never be mentioned without reviving the story of his mother's death :—she certainly was either a widow, or unmarried, though she suckled him, else surely some of her or his relations would have enquired after them.

These reflections frequently damped his vivacity; and, to prevent them from intruding upon him so often abroad, he resolved to travel unattended till he reached Calais, where he could hire a courier, who would not be able to amuse any of his countrymen with his story; and, by the Doctor's advice, bent his steps towards Geneva, where he determined to spend the summer.

Accordingly, upon his arrival in that city, he took up his abode at one of the numerous boarding-houses for the reception of young travellers that city abounds with, and soon became intimate with a great many countrymen, then assembled there upon different pursuits, and whose only enquiry concerning each other was comprised in these three words, "Is he rich?" and this question was resolved so much to their satisfaction respecting Davenport, that he was pressed to join all their parties, and treated with the greatest familiarity by several young Peers, whose travelling allowance was infinitely less than
their

their income. Dr. Lewis had also given him letters to several respectable families in the town, who received him with politeness, and gave him a general invitation to repeat his visits. By the advice of his young countrymen, he soon provided himself with a pair of saddle horses, and a Swiss valet, and visited every thing worthy of notice in the environs, in company with some or other of his new friends. He had been so much confined to Fairfield for the last two years, that he had not had an opportunity of enlarging his acquaintance among the fair sex, therefore had hitherto never felt any particular partiality in favour of any lady ; but his present companions so frequently made love the theme of their conversation, and boasted so much of their conquests, that he was sometimes tempted to doubt even their solemn asseverations concerning their *bonnes fortunes* ; as he frequently found himself much more noticed by the ladies than these, as he could not help thinking them, boasting coxcombs.

Matrimony had never yet seriously entered his head; but sometimes, when his thoughts led that way, he almost determined never to part with his liberty, as he conceived it more than probable no woman of refined sentiments, and whose family, fortune, and education, might make her a desirable companion for life, would accept his hand; and he felt little inclined to chuse among those who might overlook his want of birth, in consideration of his fortune.

CHAP. V.

HE had been about four months at Geneva when he made a party with some countrymen to visit Lausanne; and the day after his arrival there, dined at a banker's of the name of Haller, with his companions, some of whom

whom had brought letters to their hospitable entertainer, who, while the spirits of his guests were quite *in alto*, owing to the free circulation of the bottles, enquired if any of them knew of an English courier they could recommend, as a friend of his, a lady, wanted a servant of that description to accompany her on a tour she was preparing to take.

“Is she old or young, ugly or handsome?” was re-echoed from all sides.

The banker declared they must answer his question before he satisfied their curiosity.—None of them knew of a servant they could recommend to his notice. He was very sorry, because the lady, having formed a resolution to visit Great Britain, particularly wished to have an English servant in her suite.

Several of the gentlemen protested, if she was but young and handsome, that they would offer their services to her in that capacity.

“ Then I think I shall heighten your zeal, gentlemen,” said the banker, “ when I give you my word of honour she is the most beautiful woman I ever saw ; about two and twenty, and the greatest heiress Switzerland can boast.”

They declared themselves, one and all, anxious to enter her service, if he would but introduce them to her ; and several offered to part with their own servants, rather than such a woman should be disappointed. “ But was she an inhabitant of Lausanne ? had they any of them seen her ? ” — “ She did not reside at Lausanne ; nor, as she had never been in public (owing to the death of her father) for the last eighteen months, could any of them have seen her. She was the only daughter of the late Baronde Grand-Pré, who, during his lifetime, held a very distinguished post in the Prussian service. He had died immensely rich, and had left his title and fortune to the lady in question, who had, since his death, constantly resided at the Castle of
Grand-

Grand-Pré, between Lausanne and Vevay, and had lately formed the determination of seeing a little of the world while she remained her own mistress.

“ I suppose,” said a Baronet, who was of the party, “ she has not formed a very high opinion of Swiss gallantry, so wishes to try whether she may not meet with a gentleman more to her taste in some other country.”

“ I can’t pretend to say whether she is actuated by any other motive besides curiosity in the wish she expresses to visit France and England,” replied the banker; “ I only know she has peremptorily refused some very excellent offers, and has repeatedly declared she will never part with her liberty till she has disposed of her heart; and whether that will ever happen, or where such an event is likely to take place, I shan’t pretend to prognosticate.”

Most of the young men present swore they must see this all-accomplished beauty, and

formed several mad projects for that purpose, till they were seriously requested by Mr. Haller to reflect the age of chivalry was over, and that, should they attempt to put any of their absurd devices into execution, their folly would be placed to his door.

They laughed at his gravity; but he had the pleasure to perceive their romantic ardour evaporated with the fumes of the wine they had been drinking. Davenport alone pondered upon what had passed concerning Madame de Grand-Pré; and as soon as he was in bed, he formed various plans to gratify the curiosity the banker's recital had inspired him with. At last he determined to set out for her castle the moment he was up, and to offer her his services in quality of courier; he could easily object to the terms, or the duty required, and thus obtain an interview with her without exciting any suspicions of his real errand: and this was the only certain means he could devise to gratify the desire he felt to see this paragon. He had come to
Lausanne

Laufanne on horseback, and there was little fear of his missing the road to such a seat ; he could desire his valet to inform his companions he was gone to breakfast at a Swiss gentleman's in the environs, which excuse would pass current, and he might be more explicit or not upon his return, according to the success he met with.

As it was now the middle of summer, and the weather remarkably fine, he foresaw nothing but pleasure in his proposed jaunt, if he could but set off before his friends were stirring, which, having given orders to be called early, he hoped to be able to effect ; and, in that case he determined to put his absurd plan into execution. After a very restless night, he rose, confirmed in his wise resolution ; dressed with all imaginable speed ; and leaving his proposed message for his party, set out soon after eight, in hopes of meeting with the Baroness, before she went out for an airing.

The

The Castle of Grand-Pré was a fine ancient building; it stood upon a gentle eminence, fronting the beautiful Lake of Geneva; the pleasure grounds extended to a considerable distance on either side, and were separated from the road by a wall, which Davenport looked over when he came in sight of the house, wishing to take a view of the mansion which contained the celebrated beauty he was going to visit.

While he was thus employed, he perceived two ladies coming out of a plantation at some distance, who seemed to be listening, having heard the sound of the horse's feet, but not having perceived Clement, who found the wall was too high to allow him to obtain a distinct view of them, without raising himself for that purpose; and when he did, the shrubs equally impeded his sight, though, from their dress and appearance, as far as he could discern, he presumed one of them was the Baroness; therefore thought, if he could get a full view of her without alighting, he would
turn

turn about, and ride back again without intruding upon her under a false pretence. He therefore rode on towards an opening he perceived rather farther on, whither the ladies appeared bending their steps, which was literally the case, as they wished to see, from the same angle in the wall, who was coming to the castle (the road that ran by the side of the park, or pleasure grounds, led no where else); and there was a seat in this corner favourable to their design, upon which they both stepped at the very moment. Clement, not having heard them (as they had been walking upon turf, and had not spoke), stopped his horse, and raised himself in his stirrups, to take a nearer survey of their features; but he had no sooner put his hand upon the wall, than his horse flew from under him, startled at the sudden appearance of the ladies' heads: they screamed out, and the horse galloped off, leaving his rider extended motionless upon the ground.

The ladies, who attributed his accident solely to their own curiosity, redoubled their cries, and rushed out into the road through a small gate, within a few yards of the spot where the stranger lay, followed by several servants, who, alarmed by their screams, had come running from the house, and various parts of the gardens. The Baroness (for it was to her, and a lady rather older than herself, who resided with her in quality of companion, Clement owed his misfortune) was the first who reached him, and instantly caught hold of the hand next her—it was to appearance lifeless: she therefore hastily dropped it, and, seized with horror at the dreadful idea of having occasioned the death of a fellow-creature, sunk down by his side, faintly articulating, “He is dead!”

The servants, who could not conceive what had befallen the stranger, were all alarmed for their mistress. Her companion, half wild with terror, hardly knew what to do, but ordered the Baroness to be borne towards
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the castle, while she ran forwards to assist in recovering her.

“ But who was the gentleman? how came he there? and what was to be done with him?” enquired those servants who were not employed about their mistress.

The two first questions Mademoiselle Denesir could not answer; but, in reply to their last, she ordered every means to be tried to recover him, and dispatched one of them for medical assistance. The Baroness, being brought home in such a situation, threw the household into the utmost confusion. The men-servants, as soon as they had seen their mistress safe under the care of the attendants of her own sex, hurried back to the stranger, whom the gardeners were busily employed about; but as yet he displayed little or no signs of life. They opened his shirt collar, to afford a free circulation to the blood, and applied volatiles, vinegar, and various other specifics, Mademoiselle Denesir had

had sent, to his temples and nostrils, with very little effect, for near a quarter of an hour; by which time the Baronefs was sufficiently recovered to enquire whether he really was no more? No one could take upon themselves to give their opinion. She then enquired where he was?

“Where he had fallen,” Mademoiselle Denesir informed her.

“Is it possible, Mademoiselle,” exclaimed the Baronefs, in a reproachful tone, “you did not give immediate orders to have the unfortunate victim of our unpardonable curiosity brought into the house? If we had not been at all accessary to his accident, common humanity would have induced me to have left nothing untried to restore him to life. I desire he may be instantly brought in. Has any body had charity enough to go in quest of a surgeon? or has the stranger been left to expire for want of assistance upon the high road?”

Mademoiselle Denesir excused herself for not having anticipated the Baronefs’s wishes,
upon

upon the score of the alarm her indisposition had given her; but assured her all the men-servants were then employed about the stranger, and that one of the stable people was gone for a surgeon.

In consequence of these orders, the still lifeless Davenport was brought into the house, and laid upon a sofa in a large parlour, which opened into the garden, whither the Baroness immediately repaired, determined, she said, to see every thing done likely to accelerate his recovery, till they could procure medical assistance.

Mademoiselle Denesir ventured to hint, that the stranger could not be a person of any great consequence by his being unattended.

“Were he the meanest peasant in any of my tenants’ employ, he would be entitled to every assistance humanity can devise upon such an occasion.”

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The companion was silenced, and followed her friend into the parlour, who was very near fainting the second time when she caught sight of her (as she supposed) expiring guest; but making an effort to conquer her terror, she again took hold of his hand, and thought she felt his pulse flutter. Animated by the hopes she now ventured to entertain, she caught a vial out of the hands of a servant, who was rubbing his temples; and, notwithstanding her fright and tremor, she chose to take the office upon herself.—“Who could it be?” the servants wondered; no one had the slightest knowledge of his features; but his dress, particularly his fine linen, led the Baroness to suppose he was a man of some consequence: he had, besides, a remarkably fine skin, which she could not help observing, as his shirt collar was open, and a very valuable diamond shirt pin, a present of the late Mrs. Davenport’s, added strength to her surmises. He had been severely stunned, but had suffered no other material injury from his fall, and was therefore

therefore soon able to understand all that was said by his anxious attendants, long indeed before he could either speak, or open his eyes.

The Baroneſs's hopes of his recovery gained ſtrength every minute :—" She was ſure the man who had been ſent for the ſurgeon, had gone on foot, or had walked his horſe all the way to the village ; but perhaps the delay originated in the practitioner. If her conjecture proved true, ſhe would never employ him again ; but ſuch people rarely poſſeſſed any feeling."

Her anxiety, and evident fears for his ſafety, were not loſt upon Davenport, who felt himſelf particularly re-animated by the warm ſoft hand which was chafing his temples, and thought the Baroneſs too good to take ſuch pains to recover him from the effects of an accident he ſo richly deſerved.— At laſt he was able to open his eyes, but was ſoon forced to cloſe them again, till he had obtained a momentary glance of the beautiful

tiful countenance his anxiety to scrutinize had nearly cost him his life ; and though he certainly did not see her to advantage, he thought she more than deserved all the encomiums Mr. Haller had bestowed upon her : and what he had overheard, convinced him she possessed a great share of feeling ;—but he was excessively surprised to hear her say, in very good English, when he again closed his eyes, “ Heaven be praised ! ” as if talking to herself ; and it was certainly an involuntary ejaculation.

He soon found himself much better, but remained in an apparent state of insensibility for some minutes, after the repeated applications had restored him to his recollection, reflecting what he ought to say when called upon to give an account of himself.—“ He must stick to his first plan ; for where could he say he was going, when he met with his accident, but to the Castle of Grand-Pré ; and what other excuse could he alledge for making such a visit ? Besides, he was particularly

cularly averse to making himself known, notwithstanding the kind treatment he had met with, convinced that he should be finely laughed at by his companions, should his adventure be made public:—however, finding himself able to speak, he opened his eyes once more, and made an attempt to raise himself. Perceiving his clothes hang loose about him, he tried to button his waistcoat; while the Baroness, who had ceased her employment as soon as he moved, requested he would lie still a little longer.

“Your Ladyship is too good,” he replied, in an audible whisper, and in English; “but I have already, though very unintentionally, intruded too much upon your benevolence.”

While he spoke, his eyes were rivetted upon the most engaging countenance and finest figure, he thought, he had ever beheld. The Baroness lowered her fine blue eyes under his piercing glances, while she assured him she was particularly happy to find him so well recovered.

She

She spoke in French ; but her looks, and former ejaculation, convinced him she understood English, though she did not chuse to converse in that language before her servants.

He now raised himself by the assistance of an elderly man-servant, but found himself unable to stand, as he was still rather giddy ; though he felt the longer he suffered her to suppose him what his appearance announced him to be, the less able he should be to tell his concerted story without putting them both in a very awkward predicament ; and she so feelingly entreated him not to think of moving, assuring him she was in momentary expectation of her surgeon, and seemed so interested for his safety, that he could, with pleasure, he thought, at that moment, have entered into her service for life. A sentiment, which had never before disturbed his tranquillity, made him dread the idea of the approaching separation. The few answers he did venture to make, he framed so as not
to

to appear to take advantage of the politeness she continued to treat him with. The arrival of the surgeon was rather a relief to both ; as Madame de Grand-Pré, from Clement's visible confusion, earnest though respectful glances, and incoherent answers, rather began to suspect the real purport of his visit, conscious her fortune (not to mention her beauty, and it is to be presumed she sometimes looked in the glass) might have induced the fine young fellow before her to have made at least an attempt to see her.

“ You were certainly not at home, Mr. Duval, when my servant reached your house ? ” was her address to the surgeon, more interested for the stranger, from her late reflections.

“ Indeed I was, Madam, and galloped every step of the way hither ; for your servant told me he had left you in a fit, and a gentleman quite dead, supposed to have been killed by a fall from his horse.”

“ Was it possible,” Clement thought, “ she could be thus sensibly affected when she thought him no more ?” The idea completed his cure.

The Baroness said she was in no need of his advice, but desired him to offer it to that gentleman, looking at Davenport, who had met with an accident, which might be attended with dangerous consequences.

Leaving the room with her friend, and other female attendants, to afford her guest an opportunity to consult the disciple of Esculapius, who insisted so much upon the necessity of bleeding in such cases, that Clement submitted to the operation, almost determined to abandon his first design, since matters had turned out so strangely, and merely to account for his being under the garden wall, by pretending that he had lost his road ; but then would this ensure him another interview with Madame de Grand-Pré ? Would she receive him again, if he ventured to repeat his visit to renew his
thanks

thanks for the kind treatment he had met with? Then again, notwithstanding the favourable impression she had made upon his heart, he had long determined never to part with his liberty in favour of the finest woman in the world, if her temper was not likely to contribute to their joint felicity; and how could he form a better judgment of the Baroness's disposition, than by engaging in her service? Still this was rather a dangerous experiment; and should his folly be discovered, every one at all acquainted with his story would attribute the absurd notion to the obscurity, not to say vulgarity, of his origin, which, in spite of the excellent education he had received, and the large fortune he inherited from Mrs. Davenport's kindness, had led him to adopt the line of life nature had originally intended him for:—yet should he make himself an interest in her heart under so humble a disguise, what a triumph! and what had he to expect, suppose he should venture to address her as Clement Davenport? Honour would forbid his concealing

the meanness of his extraction; therefore was it likely the Baroneſs de Grand-Pré would conſent to bear a name he owed to the benevolence of his late benefactreſs? That his parents were among the very loweſt claſs of people, did not admit of a doubt;—indeed it was generally ſuppoſed about Watford, his mother had been a ſoldier's wife or miſtreſs, as a regiment had marched from a town near the place ſhe had been taken up at, two days before ſhe met with her accident, and had embarked at Graveſend for the Weſt Indies before Mrs. Davenport thought of enquiring into the probability of ſo likely a conjecture. As they had enliſted ſeveral recruits upon their march, his father might have been one of them, which rather accounted for the money found in his mother's pocket. However, whether he was born in wedlock or not, his deſcent was certainly nothing leſs than illuſtrious; and this bitter reflection never recurred to him with greater force than during his preſent meditations. Of courſe, with what hopes could he venture to aſpire to
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the hand of the lovely Swifffs? As her courier, should she accept of his services, he might study her temper and propensities, and perhaps have reason to rejoice that neither his rank nor fortune enabled him openly to declare his sentiments in her favour.

The surgeon having performed the operation, without reflecting such a proceeding was very inconsistent with the part he was preparing to act, Davenport put a double Louis into his hand. The practitioner's respectful bows, and advice that he would drink a few glasses of wine by way of raising his spirits, and not leave the castle during the heat of the day, reminded him of the folly he had been guilty of; so said, "I have already intruded much too long, Sir; may I therefore request you would inform Madame la Baronne I was coming to Grand-Pré upon business, when my awkwardness occasioned the accident which, I am afraid, has made me appear very deficient in point of respect?"

The surgeon, a true Swiss, bowed, and retired to deliver his message, which, after enquiring how the Baroness found herself, he did nearly verbatim, concluding upon being offered a second fee by informing her how amply his skill had been already rewarded.

Anxious to learn what business had brought this interesting stranger to her castle, having dismissed the surgeon, she hastened, attended by her friend, to join him, observing his liberal payment of M. Duval was a convincing proof he was a man of fortune.

The moment she appeared at the door, Clement rose from his seat, and, bowing very respectfully, without allowing her time to make any enquiries after his health, said, "A presumptuous hope, Madame, of obtaining a place in your service, brought me under your park wall, having learned at Lausanne you were in want of an English courier to accompany you upon a tour you are going to make. I am only afraid the specimen I have
given

given you of my awkwardness may induce you to reject my services ; a proper sense of my own inferiority forces me to suppress my gratitude for treatment to which I undoubtedly owe my existence."

The Baroness, at once surprised and disappointed, hardly knew how to reconcile this acknowledgment to Davenport's truly elegant appearance, manners, and discourse.—A very handsome gold watch-chain, from which depended several seals, not to mention the shirt pin, which either was a diamond, or so good an imitation, that it must deceive the greatest connoisseurs in jewels, were appendages very unsuitable to a person who wished to travel with her in the capacity he mentioned : her former conjectures, therefore, recurred to her mind. Naturally of a very romantic turn, they flattered what might truly be deemed her only failing :—she must question the stranger ; his answers might enable her to discover whether she had formed a wrong judgment. The general tenor of

her disposition, which was mildly benevolent, induced her to desire him to resume his feat. "You must still be faint, young man," motioning with her hand while she spoke.

Clement bowed, but remained standing.

"Pray who informed you I was in want of a courier?"

"An English Nobleman, Madame, whom I have had the honour to serve for some time; he learned it from Mr. Haller, of Lausanne."

This was all very possible, she thought; though it by no means accounted for the striking elegance of his figure, grace of his manners, nor for his donation to the surgeon.

"Where is your master, and how came he to be inclined to part with you?"

He had conned over his answers to the probable questions he should be asked, during his ride; therefore instantly replied, "His
late

late master was gone forward that very morning to Italy, the language of which country he was not sufficiently acquainted with to have acted in his former capacity: besides, he himself preferred returning to England."

Cake and wine having been ordered to be brought into the room where they were, by the Baroness, as she crossed the hall, Mademoiselle Denesir walked out to put a stop to it as soon as she learned what had brought Clement to the castle, who was now desired to step into the steward's room, and take some refreshment. "The surgeon had recommended a glass or two of wine;—she would consider of his business during his absence," ringing the bell, and desiring the servant who answered it, "to make the young Englishman welcome."

The servants were as much astonished to find this well-dressed stranger considered as their companion, as their mistress had been at what she could not help thinking both a

very strange and very improbable declaration.

Mademoiselle Denesir, rather pleased to find her fair friend had been what she thought so egregiously mistaken, began to rally her upon her former conjectures, acknowledging the stranger would make a very smart servant—rather too young, in her opinion: he must have lived with a very generous, or a very extravagant master, if he had only his wages to depend upon, to dress in the manner he seemed to do;—surely he had not robbed the Lord he said he had just left!”

“A very charitable conjecture, Mademoiselle,” replied the Baroness, very much piqued. “For the sake of your benevolence, I am sorry you can adduce no probable circumstances in support of your kind insinuation, which, believe me, has so little weight with me, that I should not scruple to engage the young man without making any further enquiries, if I was not confident he would
6 think

think me very precipitate, and must form but a poor opinion of my prudence."

Mademoiselle Denesir was one of those accommodating characters so fit to fill the noble office of humble companions to their superiors in point of fortune. She protested "she was merely in joke; and, for her own part, though she did not pretend to put herself in competition with the Baroness in point of judgment, she could not conceive there would be any impropriety in engaging the young courier immediately; it was a difficult matter to meet with those sort of people just when they were wanted, as the Baroness had found by experience."

Exceedingly happy to be persuaded to follow the bent of her own inclination, Madame de Grand-Pré observed, "If this young fellow should not suit her, she could easily discharge him at Paris, where she certainly should not be at a loss to supply his place."

"No doubt," replied the complaisant friend. "Besides, all things considered, her

Ladyship was, in some respects, bound to provide for a person who had nearly lost his life in coming to make her a tender of his services."

"I will have that feat removed," rejoined the Baroness, "that I may never more have to reproach myself, or put it in my servant's power to occasion a similar accident. Had the young man lost his life, I should never have forgiven myself: however, if he answers a few more queries I mean to put to him, to my satisfaction, he shall have no cause to regret his misfortune, as I don't at all attribute his fall to his want of knowing how to sit his horse."

Mademoiselle Denesir was exactly of the same opinion; and it was agreed, as soon as they had allowed Clement time to take some refreshments, he should be summoned to hear their decision.

CHAP. VI.

MEANWHILE, Davenport was regaled in the steward's room by a set of staid elderly male servants, who had grown grey in the service of the family of Grand-Pré. Their venerable appearance, and the simplicity and frankness of their manners preposessed their guest not only in their own favour, but added to the esteem, as he styled it, he already felt for their beautiful mistress. Having understood, as they thought, who he really was, after congratulating him upon escaping unhurt, they placed the best that the house afforded before him, and desired him to make free; it was their lady's wish. Davenport launched out in praise of her goodness and affability, willing to learn their opinion of her.

“ And

“ And don’t you also think her very handsome ?” asked the butler.

“ Altogether, I think I never saw a more beautiful woman,” was the reply.

The old man seemed mightily pleased ;— and, giving him a pat upon the shoulder, “ You are a very fine young fellow, and not like most of your countrymen, who won’t allow a woman of any nation to be compared to the British ladies. Indeed my mistress might lay some claim to that title ; for, whether you know it or not, her mother was an Englishwoman. This accounted for her speaking that language, Clement thought ; while the butler thus proceeded :—“ But positively her beauty is her least merit, in my eyes ; she is the most charitable, most humane, and most generous lady, our Republic can boast of : she is quite adored by her tenants and the neighbouring peasantry, and quite free from the overbearing pride which distinguished her late father. However, he is gone, so God rest his soul ! but his daughter is worth a thousand of him ; it is a pleasure

pleasure to serve her; for though the Baron was not deficient in point of generosity, a *Batzer* from his daughter's hand is of more value than a *Louis-d'or* was from his."

These praises sunk deep into Clement's heart; and he could have listened to them with pleasure for an hour longer, if the old man had not ceased his praises, to press him to do honour to what was set before him;—"he must be in want of something."

This was literally the case, as he had set out fasting, which he did not think fit to acknowledge; and we must suppose he was not yet so violently in love, as to be insensible to the calls of nature: still every thing the butler had said, increased the indefinable sentiment he felt for the Baroness. Could he but obtain her hand, what a prize! the attempt was worthy an Englishman. He involuntarily laid down his knife and fork, upon the reflection of the little likelihood he had of ever being so fortunate, should he perse-
vere

vere in his present mad scheme. What hopes could he entertain, that she would ever consider him in any other light but as a servant? and should he make himself known to her, how far beneath Madame de Grand-Pré was Clement Davenport? Mr. Haller, he reflected, had said she would never marry but for love: this speech held out a faint hope;—then how absurd he had acted, in trying to impose upon her! Had he, as he once intended, told her he had lost his way, he might have wrote to her, have declared his passion, and perhaps (for lovers are apt to flatter themselves) have been blessed for life; yet was not she upon the point of leaving Switzerland for some time, and might not return during his stay in the Republic? After all, were he to engage himself, it would merely be a frolic, and he should be better able to study her foibles, from which he could not suppose her exempt, and to discern whether she really meant to keep to the resolution the banker said she had formed. He could accompany her to Paris, where the servants understood

derstood she meant to make some stay. The journey would do him good, and he could write Dr. Lewis word that an agreeable party had induced him to alter his first intention of spending the summer at Geneva, where he could leave his Swiss valet and the bulk of his baggage, who could easily join him again wherever he should appoint:—still he thought there were many objections to this well-formed plan; but the servants so continually broke in upon his reflections, that he had come to no decided resolution when the Baronefs's bell rung.

“That is for you, my young friend,” cried the butler; “but I will step and see.”

During his absence, the other servants recapitulated the advantages he might depend upon enjoying if his services were accepted, renumerating how many years each had lived in the family, and declaring they all hoped to die at the Castle of Grand-Pré.

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The butler soon returned, exclaiming, in an exulting tone, "I was not mistaken, friend; come," pouring out two glasses of wine, "here's may you succeed to your wishes!"

Clement readily pledged him, and followed him across the hall, seriously reflecting upon the consequences of his engaging to travel with this celebrated beauty; and before he reached the room door, had determined not to act so absurdly, but to make some objections, which would effectually prevent her from wishing to retain him. The moment he saw her, all his prudent resolutions vanished; he hardly knew what he either did or said, as he could not withdraw his eyes from her engaging countenance, till her rising colour made him reflect upon his involuntary rudeness.—She was sitting near one of the windows which overlooked the lawn, where he had first caught sight of her, and looked much more handsome, he thought, than when he before quitted her. She enquired how he found himself, in so feeling a tone of voice, that she struck

struck him as being more than mortal, and every prudential consideration gave way to his wish to see and converse daily with his enchantress. He stammered out an incoherent answer of thanks, dreading she might require proofs of the truth of what he had advanced, and which he should find it impossible to give, in which case he must resign the hope of increasing her suite; but when she said, "I think you told me you were an Englishman?" he ventured to raise his eyes, and answer in the affirmative. "That alone is almost a sufficient recommendation to me; I am particularly partial to the British, and mean to visit England before I return home again: you have travelled in the capacity of courier, I presume, and can speak various languages?"

Clement answered the last, and let the first question pass.

"Did Mr. Haller know of your coming hither?"

"No, Madame, my master did not hear you were in want of such a person till very late last night,

night, and set off too early this morning to allow him to recommend me to that gentleman's notice. He merely told me I might ride over, and try my fortune ; but in case I should not succeed, he very generously, contrary to our first agreement, paid my journey back to England, where I have friends able and willing to provide for me in any way most likely to be conducive to my welfare."

"No doubt," replied the Baroness ; "and upon the strength of your late master's generous behaviour, which convinces me you deserve encouragement, I shall engage you without making any farther enquiries into your character ; you must understand every thing I shall require you to do ;—therefore I shall give you the same wages the gentleman you have left, gave, and equally pay your journey to England from wherever we part."

This unexpected success made Clement reflect upon the impropriety of his conduct. He hardly knew what to say ; therefore only bowed his thanks.

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She put out her hand:—"A trifle as 'an earnest of our agreement, young man; not what I ought to give, considering what you have suffered this morning."

Excessively confused, he paused for a few seconds, before he advanced to take the two double Louis which were held out for his acceptance; to refuse them would be very inconsistent with the character he had assumed. Besides, they were offered through so kind a motive, and presented by so beautiful a hand, that he felt tempted to raise it to his lips, as he put the money into his, saying, "When will it be convenient for you to come? I don't care how soon I am upon the road."

"Within a week, Madame, if you wish it."

"Oh, to-morrow, if you can—nay, you may stay now, if you chuse; though, as you came on horseback, you will want your clothes; therefore let me see you as soon as possible; we will then settle our route, &c. &c. I desire you will ride gently back, for fear

fear of making your arm bleed; nay, it may be better if you stop here till evening."

Clement, highly flattered with the interest she seemed to take in his safety, assured her very respectfully, that he should adhere to her benevolent wishes, and would return on the day after the morrow, ready to attend her when and where she pleased. He then bowed and retired, hardly knowing whether he ought to rejoice or regret that she had contented herself with his own word for his honesty, sobriety, &c. &c.

In the hall he was met by his fellow-servants, who all congratulated him upon his success, and prognosticated his accident would prove a fortunate circumstance in the end. Had Clement been certain their prophecies would bear the interpretation his wishes led him to hope for, he would have been very happy to what he now felt himself; desirous of being alone, he mentioned his departure. The stable people had caught

caught his horse soon after his accident ; but if he had any objection to remount him, the coachman offered to provide him with another he would be answerable for, but joined his fellow-servants in advising him to postpone his departure till evening. He easily excused himself for not agreeing to their considerate proposal, and assured them he was not afraid of his horse, who was not at all to blame for his late accident. He then enquired how the Baroneſs meant to travel, and was informed with her own horſes, which convinced him at all events he ſhould not be over fatigued.

Having taken a kind leave of theſe friendly Swiſs domeſtics, he ſet out upon his return ; it was near twelve o'clock, and he had hoped to have been back again before eleven, but thought it would be imprudent to hurry. Though he felt very little from his fall, ſtill he was anxious not to give his friends room to ſuſpect where he had been : they had determined to ſet out upon their
return

return to Geneva in the cool of the evening, a resolution he by no means wished to oppose. He next reverted to the engagement he had entered into, and could hardly persuade himself he had acted so absurdly; yet he scarcely ever saw a woman he had considered worthy a second thought, before he met with this captivating Baroness; and as he had taken earnest, he could not, in honour, disappoint her. Reason suggested he might return the money, and, without entering into details, inform the fair lady he had found a letter at Lausanne from his former master, requesting his attendance—a command gratitude obliged him to comply with; for to acknowledge he had purposely and insidiously imposed upon her, would certainly prove a mortification to so sensible a woman, and might lead her to form not only a very unfavourable opinion of himself as an individual, but also of his sex in general.—Love, therefore, urged him, under the plea of gratitude, to accompany her to Paris, where she would easily find a more proper person

person to supply his place. He should inform his Genevian host that he was going to make the tour of Switzerland : his valet, and part of his clothes, he should leave as a sort of guarantee of his return, as he meant to retain his apartment, thinking it very probable he should winter there. As for Dr. Lewis, he should inform him where he was going, and request he would direct his next letters to a banker's at Paris, whose address was specified in the circular letter of credit he had brought from England.

Having thus arranged matters in his own mind, he was rather more reconciled to his wild expedition before he reached Laufanne. His party were happy to see him return ;—but entertaining no suspicions of his having deceived them, they asked him no questions concerning his morning's expedition, and, in the evening, they all proceeded to Rolles, where they slept, determined to pursue their journey early the next morning, that they might reach Geneva by breakfast.

CHAP. VII.

MARIA, Baronefs de Grand-Pré, was at this time juft turned of two-and-twenty, unrivalled in point of beauty, foremoft in the Republic in point of rank, and not lefs indebted to Fortune than to Nature. Her mother died when ſhe was ten years of age. A Swiſs lady, of excellent morals, if not extenſive capacity, was therefore engaged by the Baron, who ſpent great part of his time at Berlin, to ſuperintend his Swiſs houſehold, and his daughters' education; and, by way of providing her with a companion of her own age, Mademoiſelle Denefir, an orphan of ſmall fortune, to whom the Baron was guardian, was brought up at the caſtle. The firſt maſters Lauſanne afforded, aſſiſted
Madame

Madame de Gervais in the important task assigned her, and soon declared Mademoiselle de Grand-Pré far surpassed all their other scholars.

The Baron gloried in her beauty and accomplishments (which were all of a very superficial nature), whenever he saw her; still he did not permit her to see much company, being determined to bestow her in marriage upon some Nobleman of very high rank, therefore thought it would be very imprudent to introduce her into the world till he had fixed upon some proper person to lead her to the altar. Naturally gentle, benevolent, and well-inclined, Maria was less hurt at the retired life she led than many young people of her age would have been; but, unfortunately, she imbibed a very romantic turn of mind, which was greatly encouraged by being permitted to read indiscriminately every novel that found its way to Vevay, the nearest town. This induced her frequently to make the declaration Mr. Haller had repeated, and to peremptorily refuse a German Nobleman

of the first rank, who accompanied her father into Switzerland, purposely to make her an offer of his hand. The Baron would probably have enforced obedience, had not an apoplectic stroke carried him off almost immediately upon his return, and thus left his fair daughter at liberty to pursue the dictates of her romantic imagination, which of course induced her to discard the German Count.

Madame de Gervais did not long survive the Baron. The young heiress was therefore freed from all controul, and determined, as soon as decency, and respect to her father's memory, would permit her, to visit the capitals of France and England, repeatedly declaring to all her friends she would never part with her liberty but in favour of a man she loved: her choice was of course to fall upon a man of rank, fortune, and merit; all she had to guard against, in her opinion, was being too precipitate. Though by no means deficient in point of understanding, her mind, for want of proper cultivation, was still in a
state

State of infancy, and rendered her early independence a serious misfortune; for though remarkably sweet-tempered, she had no stability of disposition, no fixed principles, nor was she at all renowned for her prudence; hitherto that had never been put to the proof, as, since the Baron's death, she had never quitted Grand-Pré, the solitude of which was becoming insupportable, and she was accusing Mr. Haller of wilful delay in executing her commission respecting a servant, when curiosity brought Clement Davenport to her castle. His accident increased the interest his elegant appearance, and unaffected graceful manners, were so calculated to inspire. Her first conjectures, according to his account, were erroneous, yet his acknowledgment did not dissipate the illusion; and while he was regaling himself in her steward's room, she had settled in her own mind that he was the very Nobleman he pretended to come from; his disguise and intentions were all attributed to love, and she

saw no impropriety in accepting of his services.

Davenport certainly never looked to more advantage than when he obeyed her summons; he had re-adjusted his dress, and the few glasses of wine he had drank, had quite revived his wonted colour.—“Of the finest order of fine forms;” his face displayed a set of features, which vied with her own in point of regularity, and a countenance which at once bespoke intrepidity and good humour: he therefore appeared to the Baroneſs a true hero of romance; and to suppose such a man a plebeian, was as unjust as Mademoiselle Denesir’s late suspicions. Every word, look, and action, were proofs of his noble origin. His hesitation and confusion when he took the money, the glow of shame which tinged his cheeks, all served to inflame her imagination, and delude her senses. She saw him depart with regret; and foresaw (though she by no means chose to acknowledge it) she should

should think every minute an age till his return.

As soon as he was gone, she asked her companion "Whether she thought their courier improved, upon a second view?"

That lady could not believe he was born to fill so humble a station; she had never seen so handsome a man, and was really happy that the Baroness had engaged him, as he seemed capable of protecting them in any danger, and of putting a little life into those of her Swiss attendants appointed to attend her upon this expedition.

"The very thing they want," interrupted the Baroness; "there can be no doubt of the truth of what he advanced. I am only sorry I did not tell him not to mention my having engaged him at Lausanne. Haller may feel hurt that I did not wait for somebody of his recommending; I will write him a few lines, to inform him I have suited myself,

without entering into any unnecessary details, and to take my leave of him, as I shall not visit Laufanne in my road."

Every thing she proposed, met her friend's approbation. The fact was, she did not wish any of her father's friends should see her elegant courier, as they might think she ought to have enquired more minutely into his character before she had taken him into her service, and might not think her suspicion, that he was a Nobleman in disguise, a very satisfactory excuse for what they would be *absurd* enough to deem imprudent conduct. Should strangers remark the youthful striking appearance of her attendant, she could say he was her steward's son; and surely a handsome countenance was no disparagement to his merit? These were her private reflections, while she gave orders to have every thing prepared for her departure on the fourth day.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

DAVENPORT reached Geneva, without any more accidents, the following morning, to breakfast, and sat down immediately to write to Dr. Lewis, attributing his sudden resolution of visiting Paris to the persuasions of a Swiss family, with whom he had become acquainted during an excursion to Lausanne, and mentioning his speedy return to Geneva as a matter of course. In the afternoon he informed his host that he was going a short tour; and as he should visit several families, to whom he had letters of recommendation, he meant to travel unattended, and on horseback. Mr. Perdreaux had neither right nor inclination to make any objections, though he was sorry to lose so good a boarder.—

However, the hopes he entertained of his speedy return rather consoled him for his unexpected departure.

Clement then, in a cursory manner, reverted to his late jaunt, and mentioned what Mr. Haller had said concerning Madame de Grand-Pré, asking if he was acquainted with the family.

“Merely by reputation,” he replied;—
“it was one of the first in Switzerland; and report spoke in the most favourable terms of the young lady.”

The entrance of some visitors put a stop to the conversation, and Davenport retired to give his servant orders to pack up a small portmanteau, which he sent forward that evening, directing it to be left at Morges, a small town within six miles of Lausanne, where a road, which he meant to take, branched off to Vevay, without going through the latter place.

Accordingly,

Accordingly, the next morning, he set out for Grand-Pré, in excellent spirits, studying the new part he was going to perform. Fortunately, as he thought, he met with no one he knew, of course was asked no questions as to where he was going, &c. ; took charge of his portmanteau at Morges, and, having obtained a proper direction, pursued his journey, and reached the castle just at dusk. His fellow-servants were all rejoiced to see him, as, like their mistress, they began to fear he would not come, and informed him she had made the enquiry several times. This intimation was very flattering to the young courier, who was as anxious to see her as she was to hear of his arrival, of which she was immediately apprized ; and he was very soon summoned to attend her. She was walking upon a terrace at the back of the castle.—Clement stopped at a respectable distance, and bowed to his fair mistress, who said, “ We heard you coming on horseback, as we supposed ; but for fear of occasioning you a worse accident than your former, forbore gratifying

gratifying our curiosity. I hope you did not come upon that skittish beast you rode the other day, and that you feel no bad effects from your fall?"

"None at all, Madame, thanks to the kind treatment I met with; but no blame ought to fall to the share of my horse, which, as he belongs to me, I rode hither, in hopes, Madame, you would allow him to be turned out in your park, or any of your fields, till my return, else I must try to dispose of him."

"Oh! turn him out wherever you think he is likely to fare best, and leave orders (which I will enforce) to have him taken proper care of. But pray what is your name?"

"Clement, Madame."

"I shall recollect it in future. But which road would you advise me to take to Paris?—the one through Geneva and Lyons, or the other through Franche Comté?"

"The latter by all means, Madame," hastily replied Clement, determined, at all events, to prevent her going through Geneva;

Geneva; though he knew no more of the roads than she did, except from a map he had in his possession. He had also purchased several *voyages itineraire* through France, not to appear so ignorant as he was in reality; but these he had not yet found an opportunity to peruse. However, as the Baroness approved of every thing he advised, it was agreed they should first proceed to Morges, to avoid the steep hill Lausanne stood upon; from thence to pursue their journey to Nion, and the next day ascend the Jurat, which separates France from Switzerland. Once out of the Pays de Vaud, Davenport thought he should have nothing to fear. The Baroness told him she had got a very staid horse for him to ride; how she meant to travel, &c. Then asked, as if par hazard, whether Mr. Haller knew she had engaged him?

“As I am totally unacquainted with that gentleman, Madame, and had no message to deliver to him from my late master, which might have authorized my intruding upon his time, I did not take the liberty of waiting upon

upon him ; nor, as I am a total stranger in this part of Europe, did I communicate my good fortune to any one, certain the actions of so insignificant an individual as myself could not interest people I was so little acquainted with as my Swiss host and his wife."

The Baroness's looks testified her approbation ; and he was ordered to go and refresh himself after his journey, and again desired to give particular charge and directions respecting his horse, as she meant to leave Grand-Pré the next morning but one. He retired, as she ordered, more than ever in the Baroness's good graces, who was more and more convinced he was a man of the first rank and fashion. His fellow-servants were eager to regale him ; and he informed them he had his mistress's leave to turn his horse out, recommending him to the care of the old butler, who promised to see justice done him. He had bought him a bargain, he told them, and meant to have rode him to England, if he had not met with so good a place.

This

This explanation perfectly satisfied those to whom it was addressed, who were too little versed in romance to fancy the handsome courier a brave knight in disguise.

The following day was spent in making every necessary preparation for their journey. Clement felt rather awkward; but as no one seemed to perceive it, he hoped it had passed unnoticed. Among his other accomplishments, he was an extraordinary good performer upon the German flute, and had packed up his flute with his baggage, thinking it might afford him some amusement during his leisure hours.

The second evening an opportunity occurred to induce him to display his skill.—The butler, who had seen his flute, as he was assisting him to put his baggage into a trunk, belonging to the coach, which was appropriated to his use, mentioned the circumstance to the other servants, who all strenuously entreated Monsieur Clement would give them a tune before

before they parted ; they wanted something to raise their spirits upon the eve of their good mistress's departure. He readily obliged them, and had not played many minutes, before he overheard the maids whispering they saw the Baroness; and, by the direction of their eyes, he guessed she was standing near an open window at his back.—He never felt so great a desire to excel, nor never succeeded so well. The servants were loud in their applause, and would have listened to him till midnight, could he have found breath to have played so long.

The Baroness, who was an excellent musician herself, was of course a far better judge, and infinitely more amused than her household. No man of mean extraction was ever endowed with such taste ; nor could any one have devoted a sufficiency of their time to arrive at the degree of proficiency this young man had done. Besides, his flute, which was ivory ornamented with gold, was a convincing proof of the justice of all her

her other remarks ; not to mention his being master of so excellent a horse, which he evidently did not wish to part with :—no, she was now convinced that choice, not necessity, had made him seek her service. Every thing he wore was English, and as fashionable as expensive. She was sorry she had not asked him how long he had been upon the Continent ; but she should find an opportunity to put that question during their journey. Indeed, she longed to make him discover himself ; though at other times she wished him to suppose her unconscious of his disguise, as she certainly could not, with any degree of propriety, retain him in her service if he proved to be a man of superior rank, and she would not allow herself to doubt the truth of the suspicions she had formed. How long did he mean to carry on the farce ? he certainly could not devote much time to the plan he had formed.—If, after all, she should be deceived in her conjectures, she doubted very much whether she should ever meet with a man of any rank so formed to please as her elegant courier.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

AT the appointed time, the Baroness, her companion, and a Swiss female domestic, set out in a coach and four, drove by a coachman pretty well advanced in years, attended by Clement, mounted upon a very good roadster.

Davenport rather dreaded meeting with any of the young travellers resident at Geneva, between Morges and Nion; therefore felt very much relieved when he understood his mistress meant to dine and sleep at the Baron de Cressier's, a relation of Mademoiselle Denesir's, where he should be certain of being, if not unnoticed, at least unknown.

This

This gentleman's seat was within three leagues of Nion, at which place they breakfasted the second morning; and as it was very early when they arrived there, though so near Geneva, Clement rode boldly forward, and announced himself as Madame La Baronne de Grand-l'ré's courier at the best inn, and was astonished to find himself received with far more politeness than he had frequently been, as a gentleman, at various places of entertainment, during his short excursions round Geneva, when he had taken them unattended.

"What would he please to drink?" was the landlord's first question. Then what road was he going? hoped he would recommend his house, if ever he found an opportunity, &c. &c.

He therefore easily guessed he owed all this civility to his new title, as servants of that denomination generally take the families they travel with, to those houses where they
are

are best treated themselves. He had formed the resolution, when he left Grand-Pré, to keep his fellow-servants at a proper distance, and had hitherto strictly adhered to his plan; yet no one could be more attentive to his beautiful mistress; he assisted her to alight (a privilege the Baron de Cressier had robbed him of the day before), waited upon her at breakfast, and endeavoured to anticipate her wishes and orders.

His zeal was neither unnoticed nor unrewarded, as she addressed him oftener than she did her companion, upon the road they were going, the town where they intended to sleep in, &c. observing, as they had the Jurat to ascend before dinner, the sooner they were upon the move, the better; therefore dismissed her attendant to breakfast in his turn.

In a short time they proceeded on their journey. The day was very pleasant, though the sun was covered in; and there was a
brisk

brisk breeze full in their face, which the Baroness remarked was very refreshing; and, out of compassion to the poor horses, she thought she should alight. This Clement, from a similar motive, had done at the foot of the mountain. Perceiving he was on foot, she desired him to tell the coachman to stop. "It seemed very tolerable walking."

"In every respect, the wind excepted," he replied:

"That she did not mind:"—he therefore opened the door, and they all got out. The prospect was delightful; but when the Baroness looked forwards, she exclaimed, in a gay tone, "How shall we ever reach the summit of this hill, which appears lost in the clouds? I almost dread making the attempt, yet it is a shame to ride; come, give me your arm, Denesir; who knows what I shall be able to do with your assistance?"

Her companion was short and stout; she therefore not only soon lost her breath, but was unable to keep pace with the light and elegant

elegant Baroness, who stopped to laugh at her, after they had advanced a few yards, protesting, instead of affording her any assistance, she absolutely impeded her progress.

Clement, having given his horse to the groom, was following, and could not conceal a smile.

“ I will not fatigue myself any more,” she proceeded ; “ so pray take hold of Jeannette’s arm ; she is the most able to drag you along.”

“ But what will you do ?” asked the friend ; “ you had better get into the carriage again.”

“ That is, you prefer riding ; but I have more regard for your health, and the poor horses’ ease ; therefore, not to afford you the shadow of an excuse, I will make use of Clement’s arm,” turning towards her courier, whose countenance expressed the pleasure her proposal gave him. He instantly advanced, and felt particularly happy in being allowed

to

to support the woman who had led him to assume a character he felt (notwithstanding the obscurity of his birth) his sentiments and education rendered him so ill calculated to sustain. Jeannette made a tender of her services to Mademoiselle Denesir, and they began to move forward.

The Baronesa was by far the best walker, and much the best supported; she was therefore soon considerably in advance, whilst her friend remained in the back-ground, puffing and buffeting against the wind, which soon deranged one of the most beautiful heads of hair Clement thought he had ever seen, and increased the bloom, consequently the animation, of a particularly intelligent countenance. She was leaning upon his left arm; and he sometimes unconsciously pressed the hand she had favoured him with, rather too fervently for a courier, which, though not unnoticed, was suffered to pass unresented by the lovely romantic enthusiast.

They

They proceeded for near a mile, almost in total silence, except now and then when the Baroneſs turned round to call to Mademoiſelle Denefir, who, in time, was even out of hearing. She made the remark. Clement was afraid he walked too faſt.

“Not at all,” was the reply. “The ſummit of this mountain, I preſume, affords a very fine view?”

“So I have been informed, Madame.”

“Then you did not come this road when you travelled with your late maſter?”

“No, Madame; but I have been aſſured it is much pleaſanter than the one through Geneva.”

“At all events, it will have novelty to recommend it to us both.—You ſpeak very good French.”

“The mere reſult of a tolerable ear, Madame.”

“Have you ſeen much of France?”

“Enough to think it a very fine country.”

“You ſpeak Italian, I preſume?”

“Rather

“Rather better than I do French, Madame,” forgetting what he had said at Grand-Pré.

Her memory was not so treacherous, but she instantly addressed him in that language, which she spoke with great fluency, and soon acknowledged his Italian was far better than her own.

“She almost wondered a person in his situation had found so much time for study; he must have a very good memory?”

“A very tolerable one,” he replied;—
“and he had opportunities to make use of it, which did not often fall to the share of people in his station.”

“That I suppose; but for want of capacity, such opportunities are frequently rendered useless. However, in future, address me in English, which I have half forgot; though I shall never forget my half title to the name of Englishwoman.”

Clement assured her, if he had not known to the contrary, he should have supposed her a native of Great Britain.

“ I must visit England before I return; my mother always preferred it to Switzerland; and I hardly ever saw either an Englishman or woman who were not of the same opinion. Your nation are all more or less famous for the *amor patriæ*. If they die upon the Continent, they must be carried home to be buried; and I believe they think the productions of the earth are better there than any where else.”

“ That would be carrying the love of one’s country rather too great lengths, Madame; but I have been assured no nation are so much attached to their **Diæux Penates* as the Swifs.”

“ I believe it to be a general, and a true remark, but I am certainly an exception to the rule; for should I die upon my travels,

* Household Gods.

I shall

I shall be perfectly satisfied with being interred in the nearest burial-ground:—my *insouciance* may arise from my father's having given me an Englishwoman for my mother. But where are our companions?" looking behind her. "Half a mile off at least; either we get on very fast, or they crawl strangely;" and as she did not feel herself inclined to wait for them, on they proceeded, and began debating upon French manners and customs.—Convinced that her romantic suggestions were all confirmed, she observed, "It is a pity a young man of your talents should be reduced to the necessity of attending any person in your present capacity. You told me, I think," she continued, after a short pause, "that you had friends in England, who were willing to provide for you; surely they might place you in a more eligible line than the one you seem to have adopted—perhaps through a wish to see the world?"

"Curiosity certainly was my first inducement, Madame, to enter upon my present employment;

ploy ; but when I quit your service, I never mean to seek another master or mistress."

This frank acknowledgment placed all her surmises beyond a doubt ; besides, he seemed as much at his ease as if in the company of an equal. All that puzzled her was to know how he meant to discover himself ; she was determined, however, to consider him as the character he had adopted, as what he had said certainly admitted of two interpretations.

"I am happy to hear it, Clement ; there are many more eligible employments for a man of your age, upon whom instruction has not been thrown away. Your late and present journey have, and certainly will afford you opportunities of seeing the world at other people's expence ; so far I think your curiosity laudable, as you may reap some benefit from your travels. How long did you live with the Nobleman you parted from at Lausanne ? You don't seem more than one-and-twenty ?"

"I am

"I am not that yet, Madame ; nor have I been long upon the Continent. I never was at service before."

This was literally speaking the truth ; the Baroness perfectly understood his meaning, and was more anxious than ever to know who he really was, while he felt flattered to find he had excited her curiosity, and thought her's and Mrs. Davenport's were kindred minds.

Their arrival at Les Rouffes put a stop to the conversation ; neither Mademoiselle Denesir nor the carriage were in sight.

"Well, I don't know when I ever walked so far, and felt so little fatigued, which, considering the wind, and the steep ascent we have climbed, is the more surprising."

Clement would have been very sorry if her compassion had been attended with any inconvenience to herself, though fatigue was

sometimes more felt after sitting still for a little while, than at the moment.

“ Oh ! I won't pretend to say I shall feel equally inclined to walk this afternoon ; but do get me a glass of water—I am very thirsty.”

Clement ran forward towards the hut, dignified with the name of inn, desiring to see the best apartment, and ordering the stables to be got ready, by way of informing the landlord he was not come alone. He next asked for a bottle of the best wine their cellar produced, and then returned to escort his mistress into a pug hole, called the saloon.—Having placed her a chair, he hastened to fetch the wine, and soon returned with a bottle and a tumbler upon a plate.

“ Oh ! that is wine, Clement ; I asked for water.”

“ I perfectly understood your order, Madame ; but I am sure you spoke without reflection ;

reflection ; nothing is more dangerous than to drink water when any one is warm and thirsty."

" I have done it frequently, without feeling any bad effects from it. Besides, it will certainly get into my head, should I drink wine before my dinner."

" You must do as you please, Madame ; I only hope you will eat something before you venture to taste water."

His looks, for he was really anxious in the cause, coincided so exactly with his words, that she was pleased with the interest he seemed to take in her health,—therefore smilingly agreed that she might be in the wrong ; and as she had no wish to hurt herself, she would follow his prescription.—Clement instantly filled a tumbler, which he presented to her while she spoke ; and her fascinating smiles made such havoc in his heart, that the hand, in which he held the plate, shook, while he presented it to receive the empty glass.

“ It is really very pleasant,” said she ;—
“ not very strong, which is rather a merit,
but much better than the looks of the house
would have taught me to expect. I am
afraid the larder is not so well stocked as the
cellar ?”

Clement went to make the enquiry, and
soon returned to give in his report—“ Bacon,
eggs, butter, bread, and cheese.”

“ We might have been worse off; though,
had I known we should have been doomed
to such a meagre repast, you should have laid
us in a small stock of provisions at Nion.”

This was an order the courier had anticipated. Having made enquiries concerning
the inn where they intended to dine, he had,
by the advice of the landlord where they
breakfasted, packed up a cold turkey, and
some pigeons in savoury jelly, which he pro-
duced as soon as the coach arrived, and ob-
tained great credit for his foresight. The
Baroness

Baroness declared he was an excellent **four-*
rier; and Mademoiselle Denesir, notwithstanding her fatigue, felt her good-humour revive at the sight of two of her favourite dishes. The servants were not less pleased, and Clement was particularly happy he had had an opportunity of convincing his mistress of the wish he entertained to render her journey as comfortable as possible.

CHAP. X.

THE following day the Baroness chose to walk up another steep hill, merely for the sake of entering into conversation with her courier, who, more and more enamoured, began to dread the idea of a separation, though he was conscious he could not long

** Purveyor.*

retain his present station; but as he was not aware of her suspicions, her affability rivetted his chains. Still he entertained no hopes of obtaining such a prize; for what he should attribute to love she might place to the score of interest; and ten to one, when acquainted with his slender pretensions to the title of gentleman, she would consider him in the light of a sharper, who wished to prey upon her credulity, and, in consequence, reject his offers with contempt.

These reflections roused him from his idle dream of love, and he determined to quit her the moment they reached Paris, without giving her room to suppose he was any thing more than a servant. An inborn sense of honour taught him to consider his romantic wishes as selfish and ungenerous; for admitting she were inclined to overlook the distance between them, should he take advantage of that preference, he must lead her into error; for certainly the world would severely blame her, were she to make so imprudent

prudent a choice. Thus reasoned Clement, though he acted in direct opposition, not only to reason, but also to common sense.—

On her side, a sort of indefinable sentiment, in favour of the handsome youth love had thus metamorphosed, increased her curiosity concerning him, and her anxiety for the termination of her romantic adventure. Mademoiselle Denesir once hinted she was very fond of conversing with the young Englishman; but found the remark so severely resented, probably because of its justice, that she determined to be more prudent in future.

They journied on very agreeably till they reached Dijon, the capital of Burgundy, where they were obliged to stop for a few days, owing to one of the coach-horses having been pricked in shoeing the day before they left Grand-Pré, which had rendered him so lame, that he was unable to proceed. The Baroness had no objection to the idea of spending three or four days in so large a town,

and was very much pleased with the Hotel de Condé, where she took up her abode.

Upon riding into the inn-yard, to announce her arrival, &c. Clement perceived two *would be* British bucks, parading up and down the court arm in arm. They stared at him so rudely, that he was at first afraid they knew him, but soon found they did not even suppose him to be a countryman, though they both swore he was the most English dressed Frenchman they had ever seen.

When the carriage drove in, they took a full stare, first at the equipage, then at the mistress.

“ She might be rich,” they observed, loud enough for Clement, who was taking out the baggage, to profit by their remarks;—
“ but she displayed very little taste in allowing herself to be dragged along by four heavy black cows, the only comparison which suited
her

her horses, and to be drove by such a piece of antiquity."

The courier took no notice ; but having issued his orders, and dispatched one of the stablemen for a farrier, he went in to receive his mistress's commands, who desired he would let her know whether there was any likelihood of the horse being able to travel within the week, else she would send him home to Grand-Pré, and purchase another for the groom.

In consequence of these orders, Clement chose to be present during the farrier's inspection of the lame animal. While he was listening to his opinion, his countrymen, who continued to parade the court, were agreeing the Swissess was a d——d fine woman.— They then reverted to her courier, who was by no means of a piece with her equipage, they observed—"A d——d dashing fellow, to appearance ! Yes, yes, Madame La Baronne had a tolerable choice ; but the man
was

was a fool with such a figure not to make her place him upon a more respectable footing ; yet you see he lords it finely over the old purring coachman, and the other servant.— Aye, aye, Madame thinks her reputation won't suffer while he holds his present post."

"I should not desire a better sinecure," cried the least ;—" D—mme, let's try to supplant the buck."

This *witty* stroke amused them both excessively. It would be fun alive ; how sheepish the beau would look !" These, and various other equally low remarks, made Clement find it very difficult to support his assumed character, as he entertained the highest opinion of his mistress's principles, prudence, &c. ; but as they certainly did not know he understood them, he thought it best not to notice them.

Having arrived before dinner, the Baroness and her friend went to the play.— Clement attended them to the theatre ; but

as

as the evening was remarkably fine, preferred taking a walk in the environs to following their example; returned in time to see them home, and waited upon her, as usual, at supper:—though, as there were plenty of other attendants, his considerate mistress would have dispensed with his services; but Clement could not relinquish so favourable an opportunity of entering into conversation with her, as she never failed to address him. While he was placing the dessert upon the table, the servants of the inn having retired, she asked him if he knew who those two young men were that had stared at her so rudely as she alighted?

“I can’t say I do, Madame;—their discourse informed me they were Englishmen; but their manners were of so low a stamp, that I was not tempted to make any enquiries concerning them.”

“Why I can’t say I should have considered them as gentlemen. They were at the play this evening, and came into our box; I believe
they

they were rather in liquor; that is the only excuse I can find for their rude behaviour."

Clement felt his colour rise, and his blood boil.

"I am very sorry, Madame, two Englishmen should have afforded you such room for complaint, and only with any of the gentlemen present had taken the trouble to teach them better manners. I should presume they are British wine merchants' clerks come hither to make purchases during the vintage."

"Most likely," she replied; and thus the matter dropped, though it gave Clement a great wish to give the two impertinent fellows a severe drubbing.

Next morning he saw them taking their usual exercise up and down the Court; and, wishing to find an opportunity to quarrel with them, he placed himself upon a bench in the shade, affecting to be consulting his
post

post book. They were laughing at the behaviour of the *squeamish prudes* over night.

“ Oh, d—mme, the fancies we are such ninnies as to imagine she keeps that fellow to look at,” turning towards Clement; “ a famous joke, ’pon my soul! Suppose we send him to his mistress, with our *baisemains* this morning, and request the favour of an interview?”

“ That won’t do,” rejoined the other; “ the buck will be jealous;—twig the alteration in his dress, and the consequential air he assumes!”

Clement, who longed for nothing so ardently as to knock both their heads together, rather wishing they should suppose he understood them, put his book into his pocket, crossed his arms, and eyed them from head to foot with the most sovereign marks of contempt, whenever they passed him; but they were only amused, and said, “ His airs are
to

to be attributed to the privileges he no doubt enjoys."

He was upon the point of losing all patience with them, when the Baroness and her friend crossed the court. He was upon his feet in a moment, and took off his hat with more than usual respect, while his mistress said, "We are only going to take a short walk."

Clement bowed, and remained standing till they were out of sight. His countrymen turned sooner than they had done before, as if to avoid being polite. He was undecided whether or not to follow the ladies: as he had received no orders, he sat down again, in pursuance of his first design.

"Mind that," said one of the *peripateticks*; "they dare not go out without apprizing that fellow of their intentions."

"D—mme," said the other, "I think that hint was meant for us; I take it to be a fair

fair challenge—let's follow them—who's afraid?"

"You are right; the sweet creatures have certainly got it," and away they went.

Clement, more enraged than ever, started up, when the reflection that he was a *courier* rather calmed his transports. Determined, however, that even that circumstance should not prevent him from chastising them, if they dared to insult his fair mistress, he hurried after them, and saw them each, when near enough, put an arm round the two ladies' waists, who, wholly unaccustomed to such treatment, and really frightened, made a sudden stop, endeavouring to disengage themselves. In turning round, the Baroness caught sight of Clement; overjoyed at the idea of having such a protector so near, she told the gentlemen, "if they did not chuse to suffer her to pursue her walk in peace, she must desire her servant to teach them their distance."

They

They thought proper, upon this serious remonstrance, which was strongly enforced by the menacing looks of the highly offended courier, to leave their hold—one of them saying, in English, “I have a great fancy to cut off that puppy’s ears; how shy the b——s are this morning! their bully was not so handy last night.”

“Let’s leave them alone now, however,” replied the other, while Clement, in a commanding tone, and with a most indignant look, addressing them in French, desired they would take some other road, or they might learn, to their cost, that low fellows were not allowed to insult ladies in France with impunity.

“Indeed, Monsieur,” replied the least, “you had best keep a civil tongue in your head, if you have any regard for your bones.”

“Aye, pray keep your trap shut,” cried the other, “lest I should be tempted to lay my cane upon your shoulders.”

His

His mistress's presence alone restrained him from kicking them both to the other end of the street; and this he signified to them, protesting they should not escape unpunished, notwithstanding his present forbearance.

“Why, what an insolent rascal 'tis!” resumed the least, in English: “I have a vast mind to cool his courage in that fountain,” pointing to a very large one in sight.

“No, no, let him see the proud b——s home, and then we will duck him in the stone cistern in the court of our hotel.”

This bright thought set them both a laughing, and they determined to put him into a fine fright, at all events. As they prudently kept at some distance, the Baroness lost great part of what they said; but fearful her courier might get into a quarrel upon her account, she hurried forward, though he requested she would not alarm herself, as he thought himself perfectly able to prevent those impudent fellows from again attempting to insult her;

her; had he followed her, he trusted she would not have been so impertinently attacked.

“I will not venture out unattended in future,” was her reply, which afforded the bucks a new fund for their scandalous comments. Clement was branded with the most degrading epithets, which inflamed his ire to such a degree, that the dread of terrifying his mistress alone withheld him from knocking the two dastardly wretches down, who, to his great relief, at last thought proper to turn down another street.

The Baroness expressed her joy, and thanked Clement for his attention, acknowledging she had been very much alarmed, which induced her to shorten her walk, and retire to her room as soon as she reached their hotel.

Clement seated himself as before; the two bucks were not returned, and he resolved they

they should have reason to repent having affronted Madame de Grand-Pré. His anxiety would not permit him to sit for any length of time; he therefore took several turns in the court, till he saw them advancing. He then approached the cistern they had mentioned, affecting to be looking into it, purposely to see if they would notice him; they instantly burst out laughing, and then said, "One would almost suppose that swaggering braggadocia understood our intentions."

"I must frighten him a little," continued the least: "how he will skip and roar, I warrant me! All Frenchmen are cowards, and I don't think the dog is a Swiss."

"No, no, let him alone; there might be a piece of work about it, if one was to lay hands upon him."

The least could not give up the idea;—therefore advanced towards Clement, making signs that he was going to put his former threats into execution, when, to his infinite dismay, he was seized by the collar, and,

with one jirk, brought close to the cistern, caught round the waist by Clement's other arm at the same moment, and over head and ears in the water before he had time to attempt to save himself, and was twice replunged as he rose, till the friend forced his antagonist to turn towards him, by giving him a smart blow over the shoulders.

“What, two to one!” exclaimed the undaunted youth in English, to the infinite surprise of his adversary, whose cane was twisted out of his hand before he could repeat his blow. His companion seized the opportunity to emerge from his bath; while his friend and the courier had a round with their fists. Clement gave the first knock down blow, and seizing his antagonist, who fell with his face to the ground, by the waistband of his breeches, and the collar of his coat, he dragged him to the cistern. Unable to use his hands against his conqueror, he caught hold of the side of the trough, and thus unintentionally facilitated Clement's design,

design, who, leaving go of his collar, tripped up his heels, and sent him head foremost into the water.

During this scuffle, the least had seized the pole of a carriage, which he now levelled at their common enemy, who avoided the blow, and was going to seize the delinquent a second time, when they were surrounded by four or five females, the only people who had witnessed the transaction, who all placed themselves as a guard before the conqueror, making the air ring with their loud and repeated screams of murder, which brought every soul in the house either to the windows or the scene of action : among the rest, the Baroness, her friend, and maid ;—the former instantly guessed what had happened, and rejoiced to find she had been so amply revenged ; while the two half-drowned heroes were vowing they would prefer their complaints to the Commandant.

Clement very calmly assured them, when it was known whom they had so grossly insulted, that they were more likely to be sent to prison than himself, informing the bystanders how they had offended him.

“*Insulter des Dames*” was a charge from which there was no appeal in France. Even the servant maids were eager to repeat their ducking.

The Baroness, anxious to exculpate her champion, told the gentlemen from her window that they very richly deserved the punishment her servant had inflicted upon them; in consideration of which, she should not, as she had intended, prefer her complaints to the Commandant.

“The lady was too good,” all the bystanders observed; “the sorry fellows were let off much too easily.”

Finding

Finding they had no chance of meeting with any redress, they raved in French, cursed and swore in English; and at last, observing they excited general mirth instead of commiseration, they retreated to their apartment to change their clothes, when unfortunately their servant (for they kept one between them) was not to be found, and he kept the key of their trunk. At last he made his appearance, and was not among the least diverted by their misfortune; but they felt themselves so completely humbled, that they gave immediate orders for their departure, and left Dijon before dinner, vowing vengeance upon Clement, should they ever meet him in England, and cursing the whole French and Swiss nations.

CHAP. XI.

THE Baronefs exulted in her courier's courage, which ſhe conſidered as an additional proof of his noble extraction. Made-moiſelle Denefir alſo expreſſed her approbation of his behaviour, declaring, ſhe thought they were peculiarly fortunate in having ſo able and zealous a protector: this the Baronefs repeated to Clement at dinner, aſſuring him ſhe alſo felt herſelf very much obliged.— He conſidered it a part of his duty to prevent his miſtreſs from being injured; the offenders, being his countrymen, was an aggravation of their crime: in ſhort, he made ſo light of what he had done, that ſhe thought it added to the obligation.

They

They spent five days at Dijon, during which time Clement often seriously reflected upon his folly. As a servant, he was treated with particular distinction by his mistress;—but should he presume to discover the views which had induced him to enter her service, she would probably make him very severely feel the difference Fortune had placed between them. Then what would be the result of the absurdity he had committed? Why, was it to be known, he should be deservedly laughed at. However, he could not leave her till she reached Paris, lest she should be exposed to any fresh insults upon the road. So satisfactory an excuse for prolonging his state of servitude put reason to the flight, and left him at liberty to think of nothing but her beauty, condescension, &c.

On the day they left Dijon, they had not reached Pont de Panis before the Baroness missed her ear-rings, which she recollected having left upon her toilet. Jeannette was chid for her negligence; Mademoiselle

Denesir confounded herself in excuses for her inattention; but as they were of value, and a present of her late father's, Clement was called, and requested to devise some means of recovering them. They were not above eight miles from Dijon; he therefore instantly proposed returning in search of them, telling the coachman what inn to go to at Rouvrai, where he should overtake them. He set off back again, found the baubles where his mistress said she had left them; and pleased at having succeeded so well, he made the best of his way to Rouvrai. She received them with a smile, expressive of her approbation, and assured him she was very sorry he had had so fatiguing a ride just in the heat of the day; she had given Jeannette orders about his dinner.

Clement only wished she oftener put his zeal to serve her to the proof, and was highly gratified to find several delicacies had been reserved for him.

Having

Having rode pretty hard back, his horse, which was very fat, began to flag before he left Rouvrai; and when he came to mount him again, the beast, having taken it into his head he had done his day's work, absolutely refused to follow the carriage. Clement was an excellent horseman, and of course determined, at any risk, to oblige him to proceed; but the Baroness, having perceived this trial of skill from the coach window, called out to the coachman to stop: ordering the door to be opened, she instantly alighted, and ran back, calling out, "For Heaven's sake dismount, Clement! what is the matter with the obstinate beast?"

Perceiving his lovely mistress pale and trembling, he instantly alighted, entreating she would not be alarmed.

"Don't attempt then to mount him again," putting her hand upon his, unconscious of what she did, so great was her anxiety. His heart beat high, but he checked

the rising hope, certain he attributed her agitation to a wrong motive, as she had displayed equal humanity and feeling during their first interview; therefore recalling his scattered senses, he alledged the only excuse he could find for his horse's obstinacy.

“ He is a very vicious animal; pray sell immediately for whatever he will fetch, and purchase another; the money is no object when put in competition with *your* (she coloured at the strength of her own expression, and softened it by adding), or any person's life.”

The courier felt his cheeks glow from a very different motive, and readily promised to comply with her wishes; but observed he should not be able to sell him for any thing where they were, after what the people had seen.

“ Then let Peter lead him, and do you ride with the coachman, or mount the other horse,

horse, if you prefer it, and let the groom get upon the box; you can tie that mulish creature to the back of the carriage."

Clement preferred her first proposal;—therefore, having once more helped her into the coach, he mounted the box; and, being a very tolerable whip, took the reins. The horses, having had so much rest, were in excellent spirits, and proceeded with great alacrity. The old coachman grumbled; they would run restive in their turns, if they were overdrove.

The Baroness soon perceived they went quicker than usual, and looking out, saw who was driving, and thought he brandished the whip with far more grace than her ancient chariotteer. She complimented him upon his skill when she alighted, and renewed her injunctions to have his horse sold; he obeyed her commands, and the next morning procured another, which was every thing he could wish.

CHAP. XII.

THEY slept the next night at Auxerre; and here Clement, for the first time since he had left Grand-Pré, experienced the most serious dread of being recognized, and of course exposed, as he conceived, to the contempt of his mistress, and the derision of his friends:—for, in the morning, as he was, according to custom, arranging the baggage in the coach, a young Baronet (with whom he had been particularly intimate during his residence at Geneva, and who had been of the party at Lausanne when he had first conceived the whimsical scheme he had since put in execution) stopped to breakfast on his road to England at the very inn where they had taken up their lodging. He had escaped notice

notice from being in the coach when his friend drove up, and instantly put up the blind on the side he saw Sir William alighting; but unfortunately he was shewn into a front room, and took his station at a window, so situated, that he effectually prevented Clement from daring to put down his blind, and kept him in this awkward predicament for some time.

Terribly perplexed as he was, in momentary expectation of the coach-door being opened by one of his fellow-servants, or of being summoned to attend his mistress, he stepped out on the other side, and without looking behind him, walked forward, and out of sight of the inn. To be discovered by this gentleman, must lead to an exposure of his folly; to put him in his confidence, would be acting still more absurdly;—yet should Sir William learn that the carriage in sight of his window belonged to the celebrated beauty Mr. Haller had so much extolled in his hearing, there was every reason to believe

he would postpone his departure to obtain a sight of her.

In this disagreeable state of perplexity, he fixed himself at the corner of a street at some distance, where he could see whoever went in and out of their hotel; and never was his patience put to a more severe trial. The coachman and groom came several times to the gate to look for him; but he dared not quit his station for more than an hour, though he was often upon the point of returning, at all risks; but the absolute certainty of being recognized, and of course accosted by Sir William—an event which would certainly occasion his instant dismissal from the Baroness's service, rivetted him to the spot where he stood. At last, to his infinite joy, the Baronet's post-chaise rattled off, and he hastened back, having framed a very plausible excuse for his absence.

The horses were put to the carriage, and every thing was ready for their departure;—
they

they were only waiting his return, the coachman told him. From an upstairs room his mistress had watched all his motions, and had easily guessed he wished to escape the notice of the gentleman who had just left the inn, whose equipage and suite proclaimed him a man of rank.

Highly diverted, and yet very much flattered to find him so anxious to preserve his *incognito*, she paid no attention to her companion's remarks, who thought it inexcusable in the courier to absent himself so strangely at the moment of their departure, as if to keep them waiting his pleasure ; in the Baroness's place, she should highly resent such a liberty.

“ Very possibly,” that lady replied ;—
“ but as she did not feel herself so grievously offended, and did not suppose their time was of such amazing consequence, she could make allowances for a man, who had hitherto
4 only

only given her reason to praise him, keeping her waiting a few minutes."

The moment she caught sight of him, she beckoned him to her, in expectation of undergoing an examination, if not receiving a reprimand. Clement, having given the coachman some orders, obeyed her summons.

"Why, we thought we had lost you," she exclaimed, in a gay tone; "I protest I fancied your countryman had frightened you."

Dreading the constructions he now foresaw it was liable she might put upon his disappearance, he never felt himself more at a loss for an answer. His evident confusion amused his mistress, and served to heighten her wish to discover who he really was; but not to distress him, she said, "Come, let's be going; every thing is ready, I believe," leading the way down stairs.

Clement,

Clement, completely mortified, slowly followed her, convinced he had given her room to suppose he was afraid to face Sir William Melvin; and, in his situation, to what could she attribute his dread, but to his being conscious he had either wronged, if not robbed that gentleman, or some of his friends?

Lost in these gloomy reflections, wishing he had never entered her service, and determined to quit it the moment she reached Paris, they arrived at Vermanton, where they were to dine;—he opened the door of the carriage, and presented his arm to assist her to alight, but could not meet her looks with his usual confidence. The house they stopped at was in unison with his ideas—it was mean and gloomy to a degree. Having been informed at Auxerre how they were likely to fare, the Baroness had given her courier orders to make a provision accordingly; but behold, as he had not seen the basket he had ordered to be packed (after
paying

paying for the various articles) put into the boot, he searched the carriage in vain, cursing the wilful forgetfulness of the interested innkeeper.

“ Well,” thought he, “ I shall see how she will bear the disappointment ; she will most likely think me very careless, if she does not suspect me of wishing to impose upon her.” Resolved not to place the forgotten provisions to her account, by way of convincing her interest had not induced him to seek her service, he went in to lay the cloth for dinner.

“ What does this miserable pug-hole afford in the eating way, Clement ?” asked his mistress.

“ Nothing very tempting, I am afraid, Madame.”

“ Then we are in luck, as we came so well prepared,” said Mademoiselle Denesir.

“ I am very sorry you depend upon that, Madame ; for I really forgot the basket, and
the

the people at the inn were not honest enough to remind me of it."

Contrary to his expectations, as he glanced his eyes towards his mistress while he was speaking, to see how she bore her disappointment, she burst out laughing, exclaiming, "Excellent! I hope you paid for what you packed up?"

"I did indeed, Madame."

"Better and better; somebody will be a gainer by our loss, and short commons at dinner will give us a better appetite for our supper."

"Was there ever any thing so careless?" cried Mademoiselle Denesir.—"You may well look cross, Clement; if I was the Baroness, you should stand to the loss."

"I should esteem it as a favour if you would not give your opinion unasked, Mademoiselle," retorted the Baroness, "nor interfere between me and my servants: you have less to think of than Clement, and yet could not remind me of my ear-rings. I don't perceive he was at all to blame."

Clement's

Clement's countenance brightened ; she certainly did not suspect he wished to impose upon her. Mademoiselle Denesir, with her accustomed dexterity, instantly transferred all the blame to the innkeeper ; " but Clement seemed to set so little store by money, that she did not presume he would have thought it a very severe punishment, though it might have been unjust to have made him pay for other people's negligence."

" You are, in some respects, very right, Mademoiselle," said he ; " I do set very little store by money, when put in competition with the favour of Madame de Grand-Pré."

The Baroness coloured ; but affecting to laugh, desired him to send in what the *hotel* afforded ; and thus the matter dropped, very much to the courier's satisfaction.

Next morning the Baroness alighted at a hill, and took the highly-favoured Clement's
arm

arm to assist her progress; she seemed unusually gay, and jocosely hoped he had not again forgot their provisions.

“I was informed where we slept, Madame, we should find a very good inn where we are going; therefore I thought it unnecessary to make any.”

“You were in the right; I only hope we shan’t meet with any more English Baronets; for I positively place our bad dinner yesterday to the score of the one who breakfasted at Auxerre.”

Notwithstanding this remark was made in a very gay tone, it rather confounded Clement, who said, with some hesitation, “Impossible as the assertion must appear, Madame, owing to my education having been far superior to my birth, I have been in habits of intimacy with Sir William Melvin;—different destinies have placed us in different stations; I must therefore entreat you would only attribute my absurd conduct yesterday to a very common error—mistaken pride.”

“Why

“ Why, I believe that not unfrequently leads us into errors, Clement ; but I am really angry to think that, having such friends, and brought up as you doubtless were, you did not try to push your fortune in some of the liberal professions. I don’t mean to be curious ; but I presume your family have met with misfortunes.”

“ An unfortunate accident, Madame, deprived me of my mother during my infancy. A lady, of a disposition similar to your own, to whom my misfortune recommended me, adopted me, superintended my education, and, with a degree of generosity scarcely to be paralleled, provided for all my early wants. It was once her intention to have sent me out to India. Had she lived, I should certainly never have adopted a life of servitude ; yet I can assure you I am not deficient in point of pride. Indeed I am but too frequently tempted to repine at the obscurity of my origin.”

So

So candid an explanation, it might have been presumed, would have dissipated the airy structure the Baroness had so anxiously built; but, like many more of her sex, she was too tenacious of her first opinion to relinquish it so easily.

“ This little story was a mere fiction, resulting from his wish to preserve his *incognito*; because, was there that disparity of rank and fortune between him and the Baronet, he was far more likely, notwithstanding any past intimacy, to be overlooked, than noticed by the latter.” She affected, however, to credit his account of himself; and, as an excuse for the increasing familiarity with which she continued to treat him, told Mademoiselle Denesir some very strange misfortunes must have induced him to enter upon a way of life so very much beneath his former prospects, as he had acknowledged having been acquainted with Sir William Melvin: it would therefore betray a great want of feeling to place him upon the footing of a common servant.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

HAVING spent the preceding day at Fontainebleau, they made it late before they reached Paris; and as the Revolution had not yet taken place, the number of carriages they met in the Fauxbourg St. Antoine rather alarmed the Baroness, who was naturally fearful, particularly as her coachman was unused to drive in a town, and she was going into the Rue des Petits Augustins, having been recommended to take up her abode at the Hotel du Prince Edouard in that street. They had just turned upon the Beau Boulevard, by Clement's direction, to avoid the narrow streets, when the old Swiss, who found himself rather embarrassed with four in hand, particularly as the horses were fatigued, entangled

tangled himself with a fiacre, and but for the assistance of Clement, and several foot passengers, would have overturned the coach in endeavouring to extricate it from the wheels of the other carriage.

The moment he found the danger was over, the courier, who had really, at the risk of his life, disengaged his mistress's coach, flew to open the door, to assure her she had nothing more to fear ; but too much terrified to stand upon punctilio, she flung herself into his arms, declaring she would ride no further.

Never did Clement tread so light: notwithstanding his burthen, he carried her to some distance, and then placed her upon one of the walks reserved for pedestrians. "She was convinced he had saved her life ; she saw how rashly he had endangered his own, which increased her fright ; her coachman was the awkwardest being upon earth. But where was Helen and Jeannette ?"

While

While she was making the enquiry, they joined her, escorted by the groom.

“Thank God, we are all safe!” she exclaimed, “and most likely are indebted for our existence to your exertions, Clement.—For my own part, I don’t think I should have survived an overturn.”

“Then I have been the means of preserving a life much dearer to me than my own,” rather whispered the enamoured Clement, leaving her under the care of her female companions and the groom, while he went to see if the carriage had received any material injury. His speech was only heard by the Baroness, and sunk deep in her heart.

“Was it the dread of a refusal which had induced this young man to act so strange a part? Was it possible he was, as he had told her, lowly born?”

Her reverie was broke in upon by the appearance of the coach. She had rather walk;
she

she was really afraid to venture. Clement could not recommend a fiacre, but he would engage one to precede the carriage, which would effectually clear the way, beckoning to one for that purpose ; and if she would allow him to drive her, he would be answerable for her safety.

His late speech was fresh in her memory ; she therefore suffered him to hand her into the carriage, upon condition he took the reins. The old coachman was half affronted to think his skill should be called in question, but knew it would be in vain to appeal against his mistress's decision : he therefore mounted the courier's horse, who took his place upon the box, and, preceded by the hackney coach, they dashed through Paris, and soon reached the Hotel du Prince Edouard. Understanding the first floor was disengaged, Clement turned under the gateway, in the middle of which was the grand stair-case. He stopped at the bottom, and, putting the reins into the coachman's hands, jumped down to assist his

mistress to alight.—The respect with which the old fellow seemed to treat him, the groom having addressed him as Monsieur, when he went to inform him, before the carriage had turned in, that there was an apartment vacant likely to suit, added to Clement's handsome travelling dress, fine figure, &c. led the poor landlord (who waited with a light to precede them up stairs) into a very great error, as he set him down for the master and husband of the beautiful lady he had handed out of the carriage. In consequence, understanding, from a speech of Mademoiselle Denesir's, that the lady was Madame La Barones, he addressed Clement as *my Lord*.

Startled at an appellation he was so unused to, he abruptly asked the man what he meant? The landlord was shocked; "he had taken *Monsieur le Baron* for an English Nobleman, and begged a thousand pardons for his mistake."

"I am

"I am Madame La Baronne de Grand-Pré's courier, Sir," replied Clement, in an impatient tone, "and must beg you will address your discourse to that lady."

Thunderstruck at this unexpected explanation, the poor man was again forced to confound himself in excuses to the highly amused Baroness, who, prepossessed with her former chimerical notions, was convinced he had seen Clement before, and had first addressed him by his real title. This, as she deemed it important discovery, put her into such spirits, that she declared herself very much pleased with the apartment; and desiring she might have supper early, as she was rather fatigued, dismissed the landlord, Clement retired with him, to see that his fellow-servants had every thing they wanted.

Mine host thought it necessary to make more apologies to him than to his mistress.—
"He could hardly now suppose him a servant, &c. &c."

The courier cut all his compliments very short, desiring him to send for a *Laquais de Place*, while he went into the stables, where he had scarcely looked round him before a smart little fellow, about forty, presented himself to attend Madame La Baronne during her stay in Paris, or to travel with her, if required.

The landlord, who accompanied him, took upon him to be answerable for him in every respect. Clement presumed he was perfectly acquainted with Paris?

“ I know my way to every corner of the city, Sir, as well as to my own bed-room. I can speak French, English, Italian, and German ; can ride a hundred and fifty miles in the four-and-twenty hours, and hold it : I will dress either gentlemen or ladies’ hair with any one ; and I would not turn my back upon half the cooks in Paris, upon a pinch ; therefore I flatter myself Madame La Baronefs

roness might have fought farther, and have fared worse."

"I think she ought to esteem herself peculiarly fortunate," replied the amused Clement; "though I don't think she will put half your extraordinary talents to the proof."

"Monsieur is joking; I presume you are Madame's valet?"

"I have no pretensions to any other title than that of her courier, but conceive it my duty to do every thing she desires. You are likely to prove of far greater utility than myself; yet I hope you will equally conform to her orders, and sometimes condescend to obey mine."

"You are the gayest Englishman I ever met with, *Camarade*. I have served many a one in my time, and they all dismissed me with regret."

"No doubt, few people are greater judges of merit; but now, be so obliging as to assist the porter in carrying the baggage up stairs."

"Leave every thing to me, Mr.—— pray what is your name?"

“Clement, Sir, at your service.”

“Very well, I will see to every thing;—you must be fatigued.”

The courier, who promised himself no small share of amusement from this conceited original, went to inform the Baroness he had engaged him. She was in excellent spirits, and told him, with an arch look, when he entered, that she felt herself very much obliged to his *Lordship* for the trouble he had taken; but protested she should dread being drove in Paris by her coachman.

Clement ventured to smile in his turn, and endeavoured to exonerate the coachman, whose misfortune, he assured her, was owing to the horses being fatigued, and his having four in hand; besides her laquais announced himself as so able a guide, that he would certainly never be in danger of losing his way.

“You

“ You seem to entertain a higher opinion of Montagne’s skill than I do, Clement; however, he shall make another attempt. But I am curious to see the original you describe.”

Clement soon introduced him ; and while waiting at supper, Parisien (the laquais’s name) ran over every curiosity worth seeing in Paris, with a volubility truly amusing to his fair mistress, who paid him several ironical compliments, which served to heighten the good opinion the fellow entertained of himself.

CHAP. XIV.

WHEN Clement retired for the night, he reflected that he was now arrived at the end of his proposed journey, and could form no plausible excuse in his own mind for prolonging his state of servitude. The Baroness certainly treated him with infinite distinction, considering his station; yet should he, presuming upon her courteous affability to her courier, venture to solicit her favour as Clement Davenport, how mortifying a repulse might he meet with! Besides, admitting (which he dared not hope) her heart should plead in his behalf, how could she, without a strange deviation from the laws of prudence, give her hand to a man so every way her inferior, and whom all her household had considered

sidered in the light of their fellow-servant.— His slight pretensions to the title of gentleman would be sunk by all her father's friends, who would be as much inclined to condemn her for parting with her liberty in favour of the low-born Davenport, as, were they to suppose she had been equally condescending to her courier, his disguise must be attributed, by every disinterested person, to the worst of motives: regard for the Baroness, and for his own reputation, therefore, ought to induce him to fly her presence. Yet should a favourable opportunity occur, he might surely relate his simple story; acknowledge his imprudence, but assure her the obloquy of his birth would ever prevent him from aspiring to her hand. Thus undecided, fatigue closed his eyes, and he awoke, determined to return to Geneva in the course of a fortnight, without exposing himself to her contempt. The room allotted him was in one of the wings of the hotel, and upon the same floor with his mistress's; indeed, owing to its situation, the windows were nearly opposite.

Having waited upon her at breakfast, and learned she meant to take a walk, attended by the laquais, to view the Thuilleries, not being in his usual spirits, he retired to his apartment, and fell into a reverie upon the past events of his life. Of all people, he had the least reason to complain of the dispensations of Providence; to repine was therefore as useless as ungrateful:—the selfish ambitious hopes, which had induced him to accompany the Baroness to Paris, deserved to be disappointed; the more he admired her, the less he ought to wish to lower her in the eyes of the world, which must prove the natural consequence of their union. He should never think of any other woman. What then? He had often determined upon a state of celibacy; he only wished she might meet with a man as sensible of her worth, and as anxious to promote her happiness: he would express these wishes in a letter, and deliver it at parting, when perhaps she might regret the distance birth had placed between them. At that moment, raising his eyes, he caught

6 those

those of his mistress full upon him, who instantly withdrew them upon finding herself observed.

Clement, actuated by a similar motive, retreated to the other end of his room, blaming himself very severely for having undertaken this journey, which could only tend to make him miserable; for was he convinced his passion was returned, he would never take advantage of a prepossession which must render the Baroness de Grand-Pré contemptible, even in the opinion of her best friends. But even to suppose she could feel any sentiment bordering upon love for her courier, was so truly absurd, that he placed every suggestion, which had hitherto sometimes led him to form such an idea, to the score of a most inordinate share of vanity, and strongly reprobated the romantic but ungenerous notion which had ever induced him to form the most distant hope of obtaining her hand under his present disguise. His frequent want of presence of mind, and some of his mysterious

H 6 acknowledg.

Having waited upon her at breakfast, and learned she meant to take a walk, attended by the laquais, to view the Thuilleries, not being in his usual spirits, he retired to his apartment, and fell into a reverie upon the past events of his life. Of all people, he had the least reason to complain of the dispensations of Providence ; to repine was therefore as useless as ungrateful :—the selfish ambitious hopes, which had induced him to accompany the Baroness to Paris, deserved to be disappointed ; the more he admired her, the less he ought to wish to lower her in the eyes of the world, which must prove the natural consequence of their union. He should never think of any other woman. What then ? He had often determined upon a state of celibacy ; he only wished she might meet with a man as sensible of her worth, and as anxious to promote her happiness : he would express these wishes in a letter, and deliver it at parting, when perhaps she might regret the distance birth had placed between them. At that moment, raising his eyes, he caught

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those

those of his mistress full upon him, who instantly withdrew them upon finding herself observed.

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acknowledgments, might have excited her curiosity—therefore the sooner they parted, the better. Still he dreaded the moment;—and under pretence of smoothing the road to it, in spite of his own judgment he framed some fresh excuses for procrastination.

He attended her, as usual, at dinner; but was so much disturbed by the result of these serious reflections, and so absorbed in admiration of her elegant form, graceful movements, &c. so more than commonly enchanted by the sound of her harmonious voice, that whenever the idea of their approaching separation came across him, he was almost bereft of his senses, and inwardly cursed the capricious goddess for not having put it in his power openly to aspire to the possession of such a treasure.

During one of his unpleasant reveries, forgetting where he was, he stamped his foot with such violence, that both ladies half started from their chairs. Roused by perceiving

ceiving the effect of his unthinking action, he hastily stooped down to conceal his confusion, entreating their pardon; alledging, as an excuse for his rude behaviour, something had stung him so violently, that he was not aware of what he did.

“Why I must say you startled me,” replied his mistress; “but even the flies are very troublesome at this season.”

Determined to be more circumspect, Clement endeavoured to banish his late gloomy ideas from his mind, at least for the present, and tried to recollect that he was a man, and ought not to give way to such useless regret. The effort cost him a sigh, which the Baroness alone overheard; who, in consequence of that and his recent behaviour, endeavoured to discover the reason of his unusual agitation in his expressive countenance.

“Perhaps he had received some bad news from England.”—Continuing in her former error,

error, she recollected having heard her mother observe, that the British Nobility, proud of their extraction, and still more so of their country, were generally averse to their descendants marrying foreigners of any rank.— She would not permit herself to suppose him any thing less than a Patrician.

Clement retreated with the dinner, consoling himself with the trite idea, that love levelled all distinctions, and that his independent fortune must acquit him of interested motives in his present pursuit. Romance thus overturning all the wise resolutions he had formed in the morning, could he once be assured he was beloved, he should better know how to decide. Again he thought the rejection of his suit would of itself promote his cure, therefore determined soon to bring the matter to that issue: for lowly born as he knew himself to be, nothing short of the idea of being beloved would have induced him to give his hand even to Madame de Grand-Pré; and nothing but a very strong prepossession

prepossession in his favour could induce her to accept his offers.

As he ate very little dinner, his fellow-servants thought him unwell. He left them in their error, and soon retired to his room, where he had recourse to his flute, to calm his agitation, having as high an opinion of the efficacy of music as Congreve's Mourning Bride. His window was open a little way; so was the Baroness's, upon which he kept his eyes, though he sat so as not to be perceived, and was soon gratified by a glimpse of her figure, though she also chose to keep out of sight. However, it was sufficiently flattering to suppose she was listening to him, while he endeavoured, in a strain of the most fascinating harmony, to improve the impression he hoped (for who can abandon the lover's staff?) he had made upon her mind. When he carried in the lights, she addressed him with a half smile—

“ Had

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“ Had you come in a few minutes sooner, you might have been able to defend yourself against a very serious charge which has been brought against you.”

Clement, rather confused, begged to know whom he had been unfortunate enough to offend.

“ Why Jeannette has been complaining that you shun her company, under pretence of being ill, though in reality to shut yourself up in your own room, to practise upon the flute, which she prefers to Parisien’s incessant prate. Now as I thought it very possible you might be of her opinion, I only laughed at her chagrin, and have sent her with the gallant laquais to view the Pont Neuf.”

“ With all due deference to Mademoiselle Jeannette, I am convinced she will derive more amusement from her walk than from my music; though I am conscious I may, in her eyes, appear capricious, if not deserving of greater censure.”

The

The Baroness guessed his meaning; and, affecting to laugh at his gravity, requested him to let her know what plays were to be acted at the different theatres on the morrow, as she should, upon his report, decide which she should visit.

CHAP. XV.

A WEEK soon slipped away at Paris.—Clement's station exempted him from ever attending his mistress, except when she visited the environs, when he always followed her on horseback. The laquais at all times mounted behind the carriage, to direct their movements; and every succeeding day the courier regularly resolved should prove the last he would spend in the Baroness's service.

One

One morning, as he was going to his banker's, in expectation of finding a letter from Dr. Lewis, he was overtaken upon the Pont Royal by Sir William Melvin, who had occasioned him such a vexatious hour at Auxerre. It had never, till this moment, entered Clement's head that he would most likely make some stay at Paris, or he would have been more upon his guard. The Baronet declared himself very happy to see him; thought him still buried at Geneva, which was one of the dullest places in all Europe. Paris was the only city where a man of spirit could amuse himself on this side of the Alps, asking Davenport's opinion, as they walked forwards, first, of the theatres; then where he lodged; how long he had been there; with a succession of other questions too numerous to repeat.

Very much embarrassed, Clement informed him he was but just arrived, and should set out the next day for Bruxelles to meet a friend, who was coming upon the Continent.

“Then

“Then he was very happy they had met so opportunely,” the Baronet rejoined; “he must go home with him.”

Clement alledged a multiplicity of business as an excuse for not accepting the invitation; he was then upon the road to his banker's, where he should find letters, which would require immediate answering; besides a variety of other places he had to call at, and different commissions he had promised to execute: but all he could say was of no avail. Sir William was going to dine at St. Cloud with a few more countrymen, and Clement should join the party, for he would not quit him till he had received his promise.

Finding he had no other alternative, anxious as he was to get rid of him, and fearful every succeeding moment might bring Parisien in his steps, he agreed to the proposal, promising to be at the Baronet's hotel by two o'clock, but urging his former plea of business as an excuse for his present haste.

This

This matter being settled to the Baronet's satisfaction, he no longer wished to impede his progress; they therefore separated in the courts of the Louvre, and Clement hurried forward to the Rue des Deux Portes St. Sauveur, taking care to observe whether his friend watched him; but soon found he was going quite a contrary road.

Vastly pleased to find himself once more at liberty, his constant reflections upon his continued imprudence recurred to him more forcibly than ever, and, for the ninety-ninth time he determined to quit the Baroness without declaring the reasons that had prompted him to enter her service. He would tell her, upon his return, that he had accidentally met with his former master, who had so strenuously insisted upon his once more entering his service, that he had been forced to agree to his proposals.

Thus resolved, he arrived at their hotel; but before he reached the saloon, had reflected
that

that he could not leave her at a moment's warning ; no, he must only tell her he had met a friend, ask her permission to spend the day with him, and postpone his other declaration till evening, and then give her some time to provide herself. In pursuit of this plan, he requested her leave to spend a few hours with a friend, whom he had accidentally met with, and who was upon the point of leaving Paris.

“ Certainly,” was the reply.—“ I had thought of going to Vincennes this afternoon ; instead of which, I will go to one of the theatres. You will be at home, I presume, by the time I return ?”

The condescension with which she granted his request, though she evidently had proposed going into the country, but gave up the idea rather than disappoint her much favoured courier, made such an impression upon Clement's mind, that he hastily retired, after returning her thanks,
and

and promising not to make it late, fearful her encouraging smiles should tempt him to fall at her feet, and expose his slender pretensions and himself to her contempt.

As he generally dressed as much of an afternoon as he did for this visit, having made several purchases of clothes at Paris, the servants made no remarks upon his appearance; and at the appointed time he reached the Baronet's, who introduced him to two other young gentlemen upon their travels, whom he had never seen before—men of the first rank and fashion. An Earl, whom he had become intimate with at Geneva, completed the party, and expressed his satisfaction at thus unexpectedly renewing his acquaintance with Mr. Davenport. They soon proceeded to St. Cloud, where it was expected all the fine folks would assemble in the evening, to see the fountains play, &c. ; they therefore took possession of a very commodious room at the Suiffes's, from the windows of which they could have a very good view of the gay throng

throng which was expected, while they enjoyed themselves over the bottle. An excellent dinner exhilarated their spirits, and repeated bumpers of sparkling Champagne had raised them quite in *alto* by the time the gardens began to be crowded. Just as the sun was going down, they sallied forth, Clement having, for the moment, forgot the Hotel de Prince Edouard, and all its inhabitants; but as the evening began to close in, he remembered his promise, and was the first to propose returning to Paris, which his party readily agreed to, as they had all engagements for the evening. A very elegant post-coach and four, belonging to the Earl, and a phaeton belonging to one of the other gentlemen, had conveyed them to St. Cloud, and were in waiting to take them back again. As they stood in the ranks, they walked to them, when, to Clement's infinite consternation, he perceived the Baroness's well-known coach at no great distance from the Earl's.—Fortunately, as he thought, neither the coachman nor Parisien were with it.

Intent

Intent only upon concealing himself, he stepped the first into his Lordship's equipage, wondering how his mistress came there, merely attended by her laquais, and consoling himself with having, as he hoped, escaped unobserved. One of the other gentlemen and the Earl seated themselves, and away they drove, followed by the phæton, and several outriders.

The Baroness had observed Clement walk down the street, and thought she had never seen him look so well. She would have given a tolerable bribe to any person who could have informed her where he was going, and whom to see, as this might have led to a discovery of himself; but she knew of no one to whom she chose to entrust so important a commission. More restless than she had ever before felt herself, she altered her intention of going to the play. The weather, she said, was too warm; and Parisien was asked, at dinner, whether there would be much company upon the Boulevards?

“All

“ All the *beau monde* would be at St. Cloud,” he told her, expatiating very warmly upon the beauties of the place, and the various fights it would afford. There would be a fair in the Grand Walk, and all the *jets d’eaus* would play, with various *et ceteras* too numerous to mention.

Owing to the persuasions of Mademoiselle Denesir, thither they drove soon after dinner, and had scarcely entered the gardens, before, standing sideways near a large window, the Baroness recognized her courier.— Hitherto she had confined her suspicions, respecting his rank in life, within her own bosom ; but she now, after pointing him out to her friend, confessed the romantic ideas she had so long cherished, and acknowledged the curiosity she felt to see his companions.

The *primum mobile* of all Mademoiselle Denesir’s actions was self-interest ; she therefore judged Clement by the same standard. Admitting he was, as the Baroness supposed,

in disguise, that lady's fortune was a tempting prize, and he might have adopted this plan to lead her at least into imprudences which would put her completely in his power.

While the Baroness was expatiating upon the various circumstances which were to her such convincing proofs of his illustrious origin, she was considering whether it would be most to her interest to assist or counteract him in the designs she guessed he had formed. Were she to adopt the latter plan, she should have her friend's inclination to contend with; for she was not now to be told the Baroness had unconsciously cherished a very tender sentiment in favour of her courier from the moment he entered her service. She therefore thought it more prudent to flatter her folly, and declared, in reply, that she had long entertained similar suspicions respecting Clement, and thought the present seemed a most favourable moment to discover who he was: in consequence, though they mixed in

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the crowd, they contrived to keep the window always in sight; and thus had a very good view of all the party in turns.

“ They were certainly men of fashion,” she observed; “ she wished they would come out, that she might have a better view of them.”

Her wish was very soon gratified, as they came out, and joined the motley group, which effectually screened the Baroness from their observation. “ They were all Englishmen,” Mademoiselle Denesir remarked, “ and some of them titled men, as she had caught the sound of *my Lord* more than once.” Madame de Grand-Pré also recognized Sir William Melvin, and repeated to her confidant her former conversation with Clement respecting that gentleman; but she was now anxious to see them set off, presuming they would return to Paris when it grew dusk.

By the dint of a bribe, they got possession of an upper window of the house (though it was now literally crowded from top to bottom), from whence they had a very good view of the road where all the carriages stood. The elegant coach and phaeton had caught their attention before Clement realized all the Baroness's most sanguine hopes, by stepping first into the former; and even Mademoiselle Denesir was staggered at this confirmation of her friend's romantic ideas. The Baroness's mother had always taught her to consider the British Nobility as far superior to those of any other nation; and to unite her destiny, therefore, to a British Peer, had long been one of her most ardent wishes. That Clement was one of these envied mortals, and that he meant to make her an offer of his hand, she would have considered it sacrilege to doubt; for his getting first into the carriage was more than presumptive proof he was the greatest man of the party.

Her curiosity being thus perfectly and unexpectedly gratified, she proposed returning home the moment the phaeton drove off.—Parisien, who had been regaling himself below stairs, was therefore summoned, and in a few minutes they were upon their road. What had first induced this Nobleman to seek her service, the Baroness was anxious to fathom.

“Love, all-powerful love,” replied her complaisant friend.

To fall in love he must have seen her;—and she never recollected having met him any where previous to the accident which had befallen him when coming to Grand-Pré; though she reflected he might have met her during her airings, yet she wondered so fine a figure should have escaped her notice. However, convinced he now possessed every virtue, and every requisite to adorn any station, she ardently longed for the moment that he would put it in her power, by accepting his hand, to unite their destinies. It then struck her,

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though

though a Peer, that he might be poor. She hinted it to her friend, who replied that she had money enough for both. She agreed. But perhaps his parents were, or would be averse to his marrying a foreigner?

Mademoiselle Denesir argued that he appeared to be wholly his own master; in the Baroness's place, she would tell him the discovery she had made, which must bring him to an explanation. This idea by no means coincided with that lady's notions, as such a step must occasion their immediate separation; no, she would continue (and desired her confidant to follow her example) to treat him as before, and to leave every thing to chance.

Clement had taken a final leave of his friends upon the Place Louis Quinze, and reached home just as the coach turned under the gateway. "Now," thought he, "I shall be able to judge whether she saw me at St. Cloud."—She was agreeably surprised when she

she perceived who opened the door of the carriage, as it was peculiarly flattering to find him punctual to his word at such a moment. Her hand trembled when she put it upon his arm ; but as she addressed him with even more than her usual complacency, and told him where she had been, at whose recommendation, and made several remarks concerning what she had seen, the fears he had entertained soon subsided. Yet he passed a very restless night ; for though almost convinced that he was no longer an object of indifference to his lovely mistress, still he thought her pride must revolt at the idea of giving her hand to the spurious offspring of a common soldier ;—for if he owed his birth to any creditable people, he must long since have been claimed ; nay, even had his mother been married, his father, or some of her relations, would have made themselves known, in hopes of partaking of his benefactress's bounty : still the sooner his doom was fixed, the better it would be. Suppose he declared himself, in a letter to the Ba-

roness. The fear of being despised made him give up the idea ;—no, he would leave her in ignorance of the stigma which was attached to his birth, and more especially of his love, if she parted with him without reluctance. His vanity had strangely misled him. She had certainly not seen him at St. Cloud any more than his fellow-servants :—still to expose himself to any unforeseen discovery, would be little short of madness ; and whenever he rode out in future, he must have that dread upon his mind. An honourable retreat was now in his power, and he ought to seize the present opportunity. Nevertheless, he could not summon courage enough to mention his resolution to his mistress at breakfast. It was postponed till evening.

At dinner she was unusually impatient, and he found Mademoiselle Denesir particularly tedious.

“ The dishes got quite cold—had they a fire below ? ” with many other attentions so flattering

flattering to the deluded Clement, that the evening passed away without coming to the intended explanation. The following day came; other little incidents increased his hopes, and afforded him fresh excuses to procrastinate, and thus another week slipped away; till the Baroness, who, as well as her confidant, was far more anxious than himself for the intended explanation, determined, by Mademoiselle Denesir's advice, to mention her intention of going to England;—thither he certainly could not attend her; therefore he must necessarily declare himself.

CHAP. XVI.

ON the evening they had formed this resolution, by way of forwarding their plan, Mademoiselle Denesir complained of a sore throat.

“Don’t think of being ill just now,” said the Baroness, “for I am tired of Paris; large towns are not desirable residences in summer. My mother frequently used to extol the amusements of the English water-drinking places; the season is particularly propitious for visiting them, therefore, in a few days, I mean to be upon my road to Dieppe; and, if I like the place, shall make some stay at Brighthelmstone.”

Clement was instantly roused from his state of delirium, and foresaw it would no longer depend upon himself to prolong his folly.— The farce was drawing to a conclusion, and he must resolve to part from this fascinating enchantress, who noticed his change of countenance, and hoped what she had said would induce him to declare himself.

Conscious of the dire necessity, Clement spent a sleepless night, forming and rejecting various plans, and concluded by resolving to be guided by circumstances. When the bell rang in the morning, he, as usual, carried in breakfast. The Baroness was alone, and informed him, with apparent concern, that Mademoiselle Denesir was very indifferent. Clement was sorry to hear it.

“Why, it is particularly unlucky just now,” rejoined his mistress.

He went to fetch the tea-kettle, by way of concealing his perturbation, guessing she

alluded to their departure, and sensible he must now or never decline attending her;—yet fearful, as the moment approached, his resolution would fail him. Summoning all his fortitude to his aid, he returned with the water, and was immediately ordered to pour some into the tea-pot; instead of which, he poured it into the cream-jug.

The Baroness affected to laugh, though she was little less agitated than her courier, as the moment approached, she thought, that would decide both their fates.

“What could I be thinking of!” exclaimed the confused Clement; “but I will soon get some more.”

“No, stop, it is merely clear water; by making the tea rather stronger, it will be all the same.”

“I won’t be two minutes, Madame,” taking up the jug.

She seized it at the same moment—“I tell you this will do very well.”

He

He bowed, and left his hold; and having placed every thing before her, quitted the room, happy to obtain even this momentary reprieve; but the bell soon summoned him again into her presence. As she did not immediately speak, he began to put the breakfast things together. At last she said, "If Mademoiselle Denesir is well enough, I shall leave Paris in a couple of days, Clement: you will tell the coachman to have every thing in readiness, at all events."

"Certainly, Madame; in two days you think of setting off?" putting the tea things together, without looking up.

"Yes," said the Baroness, "if Mademoiselle Denesir is able to travel. There is little worthy of notice between here and Dieppe, I understand, though I may perhaps spend a day at Rouen; and I rather think I shall leave the horses on this side of the water—they can return home again; and in England I shall be at no loss for a travelling carriage."

"No, nor for any thing else that money can purchase, Madame. I am only extremely
sorry

sorry it is not in my power to accompany you."

Having made this effort, under pretence of putting something into its place, he walked to the other end of the room. That he would not attend her thither in his present capacity, she was prepared to expect; but did he really mean to leave her without coming to any further explanation? She had been too precipitate; hardly knowing what she said—"Not accompany me, Clement! I thought—I understood."

"You will very easily supply my place at Paris, Madame.—Your present laquais seems to possess every necessary requisite, and has been much more accustomed to travel than myself; or, if you prefer an Englishman, I will provide you with one properly recommended before evening."

"Very possibly," answered the disappointed Baroness; "but I have such a dislike to new faces, and had made myself so sure of your attendance, that I rather think I shall

shall return home again. Your friends, I suppose, are averse to your retaining your present situation?"

"My only friend certainly would be, Madame, were he acquainted with it;—sensible, therefore, of the imprudence I have been guilty of, reasons, which merely concern myself, force me to quit your service."

Her agitation and curiosity scarcely permitted her to breathe; still she was seriously displeased to find the man, who had made such an impression upon her heart, should mean to leave her without giving her some satisfactory reasons for such conduct, which, if he supposed she still considered him in the light of a servant, must strike her as very strange. With no small degree of hesitation, she ventured to express her surprise.

"I am conscious, Madame, I never ought to have entered your service; but repentance comes too late; the best thing I can now do is to leave Paris within the hour."

"Pride

“Pride prevents him from discovering himself,” thought she. “He means to leave me in my error;—well, let him go; and may he still more feverely repent having made love subservient to ambition!”—Assuming, therefore, as she hoped, an air of calm dignity, “Your discourse is too enigmatical, young man, for my comprehension. All I understand is, that you wish to leave my service—your reasons can’t concern me. Reach me that box,” pointing to one in which she kept her money and jewels.

Clement, as she justly imagined, distracted between pride, which led him to fear she would despise him were he to declare himself,—and love, which prompted him to fall at her feet, and disclose his passion, trembled so much, that he, with difficulty, obeyed.—Presuming she was going to settle with him, he determined not to take any money;—therefore seizing hold of the tea things, he was rushing out of the room, resolving to leave the hotel directly; but upon turning his head,

head, just as he reached the door, to take a last lingering look, he met the eyes of the beautiful Baroness, and was desired to return. Hardly knowing what he did, he mechanically obeyed her.

“Where were you going?” she enquired, in a tremulous accent, presenting him a purse.

No longer upon his guard, he caught her hand, and carried it to his lips, falling upon his knees, almost at the same moment, to implore her forgiveness; and fixing his eyes upon her expressive countenance, which indicated the perturbation of her mind, the hand he continued to hold, trembled. The words “Fare ye well!” lingered upon her lips, and a burst of tears relieved her throbbing heart. Convinced, beyond a doubt, that he was beloved, the transported Clement pressed her to his bosom, murmuring, “I must leave you before my reason quite forsakes me!”

“You amaze me!”—*You delight me* was uppermost, but she suppressed the word, and requested

requested him very earnestly to rise, while her countenance forbade his giving way to despair.

With equal modesty and sincerity, he now related his "plain unvarnished tale," expatiating, with equal warmth and gratitude, upon the unbounded obligations Mrs. Davenport had conferred upon him, though he suppressed her having made him her heir, wishing her to suppose his fortunes as humble as his birth; therefore concluded by declaring that he dared not press her to accept the hand of a man so much her inferior in every respect.

This eclarcissement certainly did not answer her expectations, having been a British Countess in imagination for some time; still, as Clement once hoped, love, that universal leveller, pleaded so strongly in his favour, for the first time in her life, she began to think a coronet was not indispensibly necessary to her future happiness. Clement's disinterestedness also had its due weight, and his

his fine figure helped to make the scale preponderate in his favour. These were her reflections while listening to his story. To deliberate would be ungenerous to the last degree: Clement Davenport, she saw, had pride; and should he suspect that she hesitated, would instantly withdraw his suit;—she therefore, with a very good grace, laughed at what she termed his humility, and presenting him her hand, told him that he already possessed her heart.

Clement's unfeigned transports perfectly reconciled her to his want of birth and fortune, and he left the saloon the happiest of men; while the Baroness went to communicate what had passed between them, and her resolution in consequence, to the supposed invalid, who had feigned sickness to afford Clement an opportunity of laying an Earldom at the feet of the fair enthusiast. It was therefore rather mortifying to acknowledge she had long parted with her heart, and meant to dispose of her liberty in favour of a man of
obscure,

obscure, if not dishonourable, birth and dependant fortune. She dwelt so forcibly upon his refined manners, elegant person, and amiable qualities, that Mademoiselle Denesir easily perceived ambition was warring against love in her mind ;—she therefore instantly decided to promote, by every means in her power, this (as she justly deemed it) imprudent connexion, which she foresaw would place the Baroneſs wholly in her power, except that lady, riſing ſuperior to narrow prejudice, ſhould make no ſecret of Clement's deficiencies in point of birth and fortune.

To forward her ſcheme, ſhe thought it prudent to flatter her prevailing foible ;—therefore, when ſhe extolled her lover's ſincerity in having dared to riſk her favour, rather than palliate the humiliating circumſtances to which he owed his late benefactreſs's favour, ſhe ſaid, with an expreſſive ſmile, “ I am not inclined to put ſuch implicit faith in his ſincerity, Baroneſs.”

“ To

“ To what then can you place his late confession ? ”

“ To a romantic wish to prove the sincerity of your love, my amiable friend. His manners, accomplishments, appearance, and connexions, all militate against his story. Have you so soon forgot the adventure at St. Cloud ? Consider the company he was then in, the equipage which conveyed him from thence, and reconcile all these circumstances to the pretty fiction he has amused you with. His Mrs. Davenport is a very well-drawn character, rather too good for this world ;—he should have kept probability more in view ; for let her have been ever so charitably inclined, I much doubt whether she would have bestowed such an education upon the offspring of a beggar. Besides, if she did not leave him a fortune, and I think he did not mention that in his improbable tale, upon what does he support the appearance he maintains ? Not upon his wages : take my word for it, he is a Peer at last. Were I in your place, I would give into his fancy ;—let him

him suppose you his dupe ; and when he discovers the mighty secret, affect great surprise. He wished to owe your hand to love ; condescend to flatter the handsome fellow's vanity ;—that he adores you, is most evident ; and as he might, without incurring the charge of duplicity, have concealed the lowness of his extraction, I am convinced the acknowledgment was a mere subterfuge, and I must say he has managed the business with infinite dexterity."

The Baroness was deluded by these specious arguments, and Clement was again *my Lord*, and a thousand times more amiable than ever. She would dispose of all her Swiss landed property immediately : for, after all, if he should not be a man of family, she should prefer residing in England.

" Why, if I must also affect to credit what you have been listening to, Baroness, I should advise the purchasing a seat in France, which would confer Nobility even upon Clement Davenport ;

Davenport ; and thus it would only be generally known in Switzerland that you had married the Marquis, Count, or Baron of ——. I dare say he will press for an immediate union ; and as I can't see how you can retain your lover in his present humble station, why I think the sooner the knot is tied, the better ; and take my word for it, notwithstanding his confession, he turns out to be a great man ;"—a conclusion the Baroness was but too ready to believe. Meanwhile, Clement foresaw that, blessed with such a wife, he should be the happiest of men ;—to make her all the amends in his power for the disparity of their fortunes, he determined to reside wherever she chose, and to settle every shilling of her own upon her and her heirs, as soon as he became of age ; as he was more anxious than ever to convince her that love alone had prompted him to aspire to her hand, and hoped to occasion her an agreeable surprise when she visited England, and found him master of Fairfield, where he flattered himself they should spend some very happy hours.

In

In the evening Mademoiselle Denesir retired early, to afford the lovers a *tête-à-tête*, having admonished her friend not to give his *Lordship* room to think she doubted his sincerity.

The Baroness was not implicitly guided by her advice, as she even mentioned having seen him at St. Cloud. Clement very truly accounted for the circumstance. "Mrs. Davenport's generosity had led him to form acquaintances of very superior rank to himself," mentioning his accidental meeting with the Baronet, and his being forced, in a manner, to accept his invitation, to get rid of him.

"Well, but how came he to get into an Earl's carriage first?"

Clement as truly accounted for this solecism in politeness, rather astonished at the numerous questions of his fair enslaver. But did ever a young man of twenty perceive any failings in an adored object? Had such a thing
been

been in nature, he possibly might have discovered that even love could hardly palliate his low origin in the Baroness's eyes. That it should ever remain a profound secret, was now her only care ; for even romance was forced to surrender to the conviction of reason, and, spite of her friend's arguments, she could no longer doubt his *sincerity*.

She next mentioned her intention of parting with her Swiss estates ; to facilitate the disposal of which, though she was by no means averse to an immediate union, she wished their marriage to remain a secret till they were sold. The enamoured youth instantly acceded to her request, conscious it would not redound to Madame de Grand-Pré's honour, were it to be known in Switzerland she had married her courier. So long as she did not wish to postpone the ceremony, he was amenable to all her desires ; it was therefore agreed they should be married, with all due regard to privacy, in the course of a few days.

Mademoiselle Denesir and Jeannette must necessarily be in the secret: the latter should be told Clement was a man of family in England, who had fallen in love with the Baroness, &c. Davenport made no objections, though he did not think it absolutely necessary to enter into such minute details to the maid.

It was next decided that the Baroness should send all her own horses, and two Swiss men-servants, home, as it would be far more agreeable to prosecute their travels post; but as she was averse to visiting England till she had converted her land into ready money, they agreed to spend the winter in Italy, which would afford her steward time to put matters in train for the intended sale, which she would return home to conclude, while Clement procured them another habitation, either in France or England. They were to travel as Mr. and Mrs. Davenport; yet she meant her steward's and Banker's letters to be addressed to Madame de Grand-Pré;—and as Mademoiselle Denesir would be of
3 their

their party, and they should see no company, she might be supposed to be that lady, as she would inform her steward that she had joined an English party who were going the tour she had fixed upon. All they had to guard against, was being either of them known;—and as they could easily learn the names of the English or Swiss of any note who resided in Italy, they must take their measures accordingly.

Every thing she proposed met with Clement's approbation, who resolved to write to his Genevian host to discharge his apartment and valet, upon whom he meant to bestow that part of his wardrobe which he had left behind him; and as he found his wife took it for granted he was as much a dependant upon Dr. Lewis as he had been upon the late Mrs. Davenport, he resolved to leave her in her error till she had seen Fairfield, which he determined greatly to embellish previous to that event, with the money he should be able to spare out of his income.

Mademoiselle Denesir still maintained her first opinion ; and if she did seem to waver in deference to the Baroness's judgment, she protested Davenport was so elegant and so handsome, that he would eclipse every beau at Versailles, should Madame de Grand-Pré purchase a seat in France ; and treated him with a degree of respect from the moment she was acquainted with the Baroness's determination, particularly flattering to her friend. The coachman and groom were sent home the day before the wedding, neither of them sorry their travels were drawing to a conclusion.— An English clergyman joined the hands of the happy couple, who left Paris immediately after the ceremony—the Baroness, Mademoiselle Denesir, and Jeannette in the coach, the happy Clement, mounted upon a post-horse, attending them as their courier. They had once been inclined to put Parisien into their secret, and retain him to supply the bridegroom's place, who got into the carriage at the end of the second stage, engaging a postillion in his stead ; but the laquais had so often commented upon the freedom with which

which his mistress treated Clement, and been so sarcastic in his remarks, that they did not chuse to continue him in their suite.

CHAP. XVII.

THE happy couple bent their steps towards Avignon, where they made a short stay, and provided themselves with one manservant, not chusing, as their greatest object was privacy, to increase their suite till they acknowledged their marriage.

Having seen every thing worthy notice in the French Papal dominions, they proceeded to Nice, where they embarked on board a Fellucca for Genoa, meaning to fix their abode upon the banks of the Arno, in the vicinity of Florence, and soon thought themselves as completely happy as mortals can be in this vale of misery. The Baroness forgot her husband's extraction in the contemplation of

his many amiable qualities ; and his gratitude for the sacrifice she had made at the shrine of love was as unbounded as his affection.

Mademoiselle Denefir, who had not absolutely intended to promote their happiness when she advised the Baroness to marry Davenport, grew envious of their conjugal felicity, and began to presume very much upon the mighty secret she had been entrusted with, and frequently gave her opinion with a degree of freedom the Baroness could but ill brook, considering her former submission ; — but the artful confidant knew how much she dreaded her imprudent choice coming to the knowledge of her father's friends, and not unfrequently in their *tête-à-têtes*, lamented the infatuation which had led the heiress of the House of Grand-Pré to give her hand to a base-born adventurer ; for she no longer affected to believe Clement a *patrician*. “She had been most egregiously deceived in her former conjectures ; indeed, had she seen the young man in the character of
of

of a gentleman before his marriage, she should not have been so strangely mistaken."

Madame de Grand-Pré, often provoked beyond endurance, retorted at such times so sharply, that she was forced to qualify her terms, lest that lady should acknowledge her marriage purposely to get rid of her interested confidant. As for Clement, he merely laughed at her continual attempts to lower him in the eyes of his wife, and frequently gently remonstrated with the latter for allowing her ill-natured sarcasms to affect her temper, sensible it would be imprudent to quarrel with her till the Baroness, who was now often indisposed, had completed the sale of her estates. Besides, he thought she would be a necessary evil during his wife's confinement; and as that lady continued bent upon concealing her marriage, and disposing of her landed property, he the less wondered at her confidant's behaviour, who seemed to think she had them both completely in her power, which afforded her a sort of malignant triumph, and made her ample amends for

her former mortifications, which she now resorted with interest upon Davenport whenever she found an opportunity.

He continued to correspond with Dr. Lewis, though he had not informed that gentleman of his marriage, who saw nothing extraordinary in the long stay he seemed inclined to make at Florence, knowing the amusements that city afforded travellers of every denomination.

As these letters must have informed his wife he was master of a very elegant villa, which was undergoing various improvements upon her account, he never shewed them to her, though he was sometimes tempted to request she would remove thither, to free herself at once from the impertinence of her presuming confidant, who never failed to expatiate, when alone with the Baroness, upon the mystery he made of his English letters: a man of honour (but when was that quality found in plebeians?) never had any secrets that he dared not trust to a beloved wife.

wife. If the Baroness silenced her in a peremptory manner, she attributed her zeal to excess of attachment, and behaved with such humility and contrition, that she soon obtained her pardon, and as constantly repeated her offence, invidiously undermining the happiness of her friend by reflections upon the past, and anticipations of future evils.

“Davenport was upon his good behaviour now ; but let him once have possession of her fortune, and she would discover what had been the god of his idolatry : all that remained for her to do was, to place the best part of it in the hands of a tried friend ; thus she would always have a resource.” Her prognostics sometimes affected the credulous Baroness ; but a short *tête-à-tête* with her husband ever restored her to her wonted cheerfulness.

Unconscious of the real malignity of her disposition, he considered Mademoiselle Denesir with contempt instead of dread ; and, by persevering

persevering in his silence respecting the ample fortune he possessed, furnished a never-failing fund for her mischievous propensities.

The Baroness, by way of regaining the consequence she had lost, proposed, as has been before mentioned, by the advice of her subtle confidant, as soon as she had disposed of her Swiss estates, to make a purchase in France, which would ennoble her beloved Clement; but this was a plan that by no means met his approbation, as he very justly alledged such titles conferred ridicule instead of honour, upon the purchaser; and, in his opinion, an estate in England would be far preferable. She would be a Baroness in any country, if such an addition to her name could increase her felicity; and he would rather be an English Commoner than a French Duke by purchase; otherwise no one respected the real ancient Nobility of every country more than himself.

Mademoiselle Denesir openly espoused the Baroness's side of the question. "Her will, in the

the present case, ought to be law; her marriage made it necessary she should part with her hereditary family seat, and she alone ought to decide where she chose to fix her future residence."

"It grieves me much," retorted Davenport, with a smile,—“who speaks so well, should ever speak in vain.”

The Baroness laughed out, and said she would visit England before she came to any decision. This was all that her husband wished, who had too much good sense to feel hurt at the air of superiority she sometimes assumed, particularly after a private conference with Mademoiselle Denesir.

At the expiration of ten months she laid in of a daughter—an event that increased the mutual love of both husband and wife. It had been long decided they should leave Florence as soon as the young traveller, who had been for some time expected, should be thought able to bear the fatigue of a journey; and as she was not to be seen at Grand-Pré,

she was to remain with her father and Jeannette at Chamberry, while the Baroness and Mademoiselle Denesir pursued their route into Switzerland, where the former supposed she should be obliged to spend six weeks or a couple of months. They were then all to meet again at Lyons, and proceed together to England. To Davenport's great astonishment, this plan met their confidant's approbation, and he determined, once arrived at Fairfield, he would soon put it out of her power to disturb his domestic tranquillity; certain his wife would even leave her in Switzerland, if he expressed such a wish;—but he rather enjoyed the thoughts of convincing her he was not the absolute dependant upon his wife she supposed him to be.—The young Maria being turned of four months, and pronounced strong enough to undertake the journey by Jeannette, who was become her nurse, they had agreed to set out for Turin in the course of a week, when Davenport received a letter from Dr. Lewis, requesting his immediate return to England, upon business of rather an important

portant nature ;—he did not think it prudent to be more explicit, yet requested he would not endanger his health by a too hasty journey, as a short delay would not be of any material consequence. Clement was astonished beyond measure. What could this mean, and why was the Doctor so reserved ? he certainly had no good news to communicate. Some one had perhaps appeared to claim Mrs. Davenport's fortune. Surely no one had appeared to claim him ! Well, he could not sink lower in point of birth than he had ever stood in his own estimation ; but his first conjecture was far more probable than his last. How fortunate it was, therefore, he had never mentioned Fairfield to his wife ! and should his suspicions be realized, he would become a French Marquis, if she chose ; and surely he ought not to murmur while he possessed such a treasure.

At that moment the Baroness joined him ; and, perceiving his agitation, eagerly enquired what had disturbed him. He still held the letter in his hand, to the receipt of which
he

he placed the emotion his countenance displayed, without offering to shew it her.—Mademoiselle Denesir had followed her into the room, and presumed, with a sneer, that he was fearful of affecting his wife, since he chose to be so mysterious.

“Nothing very disagreeable has occurred, I hope?” asked the now curious Baroness.

Unwilling to keep her in suspense, he instantly gave her the letter to read, as it merely contained the laconic request which had so much surprised him.

“You guess, I presume, Davenport, to what this hasty summons is owing, though your friend is so concise?”

“Upon my word I do not, though I mean to obey it, as it will make no material alteration in our plans. I shall only proceed to England instead of remaining at Chamberry, while you go into Switzerland; and I will

will equally give you the meeting at Lyons : therefore, suppose we set off to-morrow."

The Baroness readily agreed, and even the confidant made no objections ; on the contrary observed, that it was rather a fortunate circumstance this summons for Mr. Davenport did not arrive sooner.

The following morning they left Florence, and reached Chamberry without any accident occurring to retard their journey ;—there Clement took leave of his wife ; they parted with mutual regret, but each anticipated the pleasure of their next meeting. The Baroness would have forced some money upon her husband at parting, but he absolutely refused to take any, assuring her he was in no need of any pecuniary supplies. Indeed he had been particularly delicate upon this article ever since his marriage, and had long since determined to confine his own expences to his own income, ever fearful she should suppose he sought to gain her affections through interested motives.

It

It had been decided that the money, arising from the intended sale, should be placed in the English funds till they fixed upon their future residence ; and Clement, at parting, renewed his promise of settling it all upon his wife and her heirs, upon her saying she hoped her whole fortune would be in England in the course of the ensuing three months ; — she only meant to spend one day at Chamberry, to settle Jeannette and her daughter ; and he might depend upon her being as expeditious as possible, considering the momentous concerns which carried her into Switzerland, as she should be all impatience to be upon the road to Lyons.

Thus, after repeated adieus, and mutual promises to write often, they parted, and Clement pursued his journey to Calais, attended by their man-servant, whom he was to discharge there ; while the Baroness, having placed Jeannette and her daughter in a private lodging, and provided for their present wants, set out for Switzerland, having
agreed

agreed with her confidant to tell her household that her courier and Jeannette had made a match, which had induced her to return thus unattended.

CHAP. XVIII.

DAVENPORT, naturally very impatient, travelled with all imaginable speed through France; and, after a very short passage, set off with the same expedition for London, where he merely stopped to change horses before he proceeded to Fairfield.—When he came in sight of the house, his heart sunk within him upon perceiving the front windows were all shut up.

“ ’Tis as I suspected,” thought he;—
“ somebody has claimed Mrs. Davenport’s

port's fortune, and have begun by taking possession of this beloved retreat, where I vainly hoped to spend so many happy days with my Maria."

As the chaise advanced, he caught a full view of the windows of the apartment which Dr. Lewis had occupied from the first moment of his residence there. The shutters were not quite closed like the rest, and one sash was up a little way to admit the air.— This increased his anxiety, as he had ever been particularly attached to his worthy tutor; and if this good man had not been forced to remove, as his first fears had led him to surmise, he was certainly confined to his room, if nothing worse had befallen him. He had the door of the chaise ready to jump out the moment it stopped, and would have instantaneously rushed into the house, had the door given way to his hand; but it was fastened within side, and his former suspicions recurred more forcibly to his agitated mind.

Having

Having knocked very hard, he was (not gaining instant admittance) going to run round to another entrance, when he heard footsteps advancing across the hall, and, in a few seconds, the door was slowly opened by an elderly man-servant, who had lived with Mrs. Davenport from the time she took up her residence in Hertfordshire. William had seen the chaise advancing, and had guessed, from his being expected, whom it contained; but felt such a repugnance to be the herald of bad news, that he had increased his master's agitation by his unwillingness to enter upon his afflicting task, well knowing the sincere and mutual esteem which had long subsisted between Davenport and Dr. Lewis.

“For Heaven's sake, William, what is the matter?” enquired the petrified youth, gazing upon the domestic's sorrowful countenance, “which, like a title leaf, foretold the nature of a tragic volume.”

“Oh,

“ Oh Sir,” was the reply, “ would to God you had arrived four-and-twenty hours sooner ! However, it is very fortunate—you are yet in time to give every necessary order.”

The truth instantly flashed upon Clement's mind ; and to have found his first suggestions realized, would have given him a much less shock than the one he received, when the servant confirmed his suspicions, by informing him that the worthy Doctor was no more. He hastened into the first darkened room that presented itself ; and having shut himself in, gave way, for some time, to the overflowing of his grateful heart. We are never, perhaps, so truly sensible of the real worth of our friends, as at the moment we learn we have lost them for ever ; so it fared with Davenport, who was more than ever impressed with a deep sense of the numerous benefits he had received at the Doctor's hands.

Having

Having rather overcome his first emotion, he rang the bell, wishing to learn the particulars of the event he so much deplored.— William soon made his appearance ; and, in answer to his enquiries, informed him that the Doctor had departed this life about eight o'clock the preceding evening, having, to the last moment, expressed a most anxious wish to see and bless his beloved pupil.— “ He has given many things into my charge, Sir,” he continued ; “ papers which he told me were of great consequence ;—shall I fetch them ?”

“ Not just now,” replied the afflicted Clement ; “ I am not sufficiently composed to examine them with proper attention. How long had the Doctor been ill, and why was not I apprized of his dangerous situation ?”

“ He was taken very suddenly, Sir, about five days ago, though he has been very unwell for some time. I would have sent for you express, as soon as I was apprized of his danger ; but he forbade me, assuring me he expected you very speedily in consequence of his
his

his last letter; and that, at all events, the news of his approaching dissolution would most probably miss you upon the road, were I to write;—and as I did not know where to address you, Sir, I was forced to abide by his decision; and I hoped, as he did, you would arrive in time, which would have been a great consolation to him in his last moments.”

Clement now dismissed the servant with orders to bring him the papers he mentioned, in half an hour, thinking it might be necessary to examine them immediately. When he was once more left alone, he blamed himself very severely for not having left Florence the moment he received the letter which had brought him to England, and for having spent near a day and night at Chamberry, as these delays had prevented him from taking a last leave of this kind friend. He next reverted to the summons which had induced him to undertake this journey, and presumed he should find an explanation of this enigma among the papers he was going to examine; and,

and, at the appointed time, William appeared with tea, lights, and the parcel which had been entrusted to his care.

Davenport had hitherto forgot he had scarcely allowed himself a minute upon the road to eat a sandwich, and swallow a glass of negus. The tea rather revived his spirits; and as soon as he had finished, he broke the seals of the packet. The first thing he opened was his friend's will, who he found had appointed him his sole executor, and bequeathed him all he had to leave, which, though trifling, compared to what he derived from Mrs. Davenport's bounty, excited scarcely less gratitude in the bosom of Clement, and made him more than ever regret he had not reached Fairfield the day before.

He next perused a letter of several sheets, addressed to himself, which had been written at intervals after the worthy Doctor had become sensible of his immediate danger; in which he acknowledged he had purposely
endeavoured,

endeavoured, under the pretence of requiring his presence in England upon business of importance, to draw him from Florence, where he had learnt, through the means of an old friend, and constant correspondent, that he had formed a connection which he was afraid would prove as subversive of his morals as ruinous to his fortune. The privacy in which he understood he lived in so gay a city, and the recent increase he was informed this foreign lady, whom he permitted to bear his name, had made to his family, caused him such uneasiness, that he was determined to represent the probable consequences of so imprudent an engagement to him, in every way likely to recal him to a sense of what he owed himself, and more particularly the memory of his deceased benefactress, which would be seriously disgraced, were he, to make an improper use of that fortune. She had so generously bestowed upon him, out of which he agreed he ought to make a proper provision for the unfortunate infant which was the fruit

fruit of this private amour; but if the mother was not of that description of females which a man of honour might confer his name upon without disgrace, he adjured him, in the most solemn manner, to seize the present opportunity to break off his acquaintance with her, advising him to remove the child through the agency of a friend, that he might not again expose himself to the fascinating smiles of the beautiful fyren his friend had described.

How severely did Clement repent having concealed his marriage from this worthy man! because a circumstance, that must have done him honour, owing to his dissimulation towards this best of friends, had thus had the exact contrary effect. How often had he enjoyed the idea of presenting his lovely wife to his kind tutor! and he was ~~not~~ only deprived of this pleasure, but was also convinced the imperfect knowledge he had obtained of his situation had embittered the last moments of his only remaining friend's life,

who, notwithstanding what he must suppose proofs of his want of principle, had nominated him his heir, in hopes, no doubt, to reclaim him from his evil courses. What a satisfaction it would have afforded him, had he been permitted to exculpate himself in his benefactor's eyes; yet, in conformity to his excellent precepts, he did not venture to murmur at those dispensations it would be impious to arraign, and considered himself hardly sufficiently punished for having withdrawn his confidence from his venerable monitor; determining, as the only atonement now in his power to make for the past, to regulate his future conduct as near as possible by those rules the Doctor would have been most likely to recommend; and every thing that remained for him to do, evinced at once the liberality of his spirit, and the respect he bore the deceased.

As soon as the funeral was over, and he had executed every wish as nearly as he could imagine it possible that the

Doctor might have formed, he wrote a long letter to his beloved Maria, informing her he had been recalled on account of his only surviving friend's illness, who had unfortunately departed this life for a better before he arrived ; expatiating upon his impatience to hear she had terminated all her business in Switzerland, and promising to set out for Lyons as soon as he received her answer, where, from being so much nearer Grand-Pré, he should pass his time more pleasantly than in England, admitting she was obliged to prolong her intended stay there.— This done, he set about completing those alterations Dr. Lewis had already, by his desire, put in train ; anticipating, with infinite delight, while beautifying his truly elegant villa, the agreeable surprise he had in store for his amiable Baroness.

CHAP. XIX.

IF he had not been thus fully employed, he would probably have thought the time longer ere he received an answer from his wife; who, though she expressed herself in the kindest terms, could not, to his infinite regret, fix any time for their future meeting, which she requested might take place at Paris instead of Lyons, as first proposed, to avoid any scandalous stories which such an event, so near home, might occasion. She meant to report, nay, had already, that she was going to reside in Germany. Her father had been so long in the Prussian service, that the story had passed current; and when she thought fit to declare her having married an Englishman, which could not be
done

done till the sale of her estates were completed, her friends might suppose him a Catholic Nobleman in the Imperial service, which would prevent their considering the match as either improper, or beneath the heiress of the Baron de Grand-Pré; concluding by informing him, that a recent letter from Jeannette had brought assurances of the young Maria's health.

Clement felt hurt by the boast his wife seemed to make of her superior rank and family; but consoled himself with reflecting that it was her only failing, and was at this time, he was convinced, particularly encouraged by her humble friend;—and he had, perhaps, helped to promote it, by allowing her to suppose, if he had not married as he did, that he must have earned his daily bread either in her's, or some other person's service. He had certainly acted wrong; still he could not relinquish the plan he had formed; no, she should remain in ignorance of his circumstances till she reached Fairfield, when he

would put the management of every thing into her hands, and be wholly guided by her wishes with respect to their mode of living, as he should never pretend to controul her in the expenditure of her fortune ;—his own income would be ever far more than sufficient for his private wants, and he was determined, if he could not greatly enrich, he would not impoverish the “ *heirefs of the House of Grand-Pré.*”

Having come to this resolution, he wrote her word that he readily subscribed to all her arrangements, and should therefore set out immediately for Paris, and meant to take up his abode at the Hotel d'Angleterre, in the Rue de Richilieu, where he hoped to find a letter, if she could not, as he feared, give him the meeting in person. He then thought it necessary (having occasion to give various orders, which might otherwise appear very useless) to disclose the purport of his journey in confidence to William, as he wished him to make a proper addition to his household

household during his absence, and to have every thing ready for his wife's reception, promising to give him timely notice of their arrival. This done, having no longer any thing to detain him at Fairfield, he began his journey, merely attended by a servant out of livery, whom he had engaged soon after his return into Hertfordshire; and reached Paris, without any thing occurring worthy notice, the first week in January.

A second letter from the Baroneſs, which he received a few days after his arrival, put his patience to rather a ſevere trial, as ſhe informed him ſhe was fearful ſhe ſhould not be able to join him before the latter end of the month at ſoonest, though ſhe ſhould moſt probably ſet out before ſhe could receive an answer to her letter; therefore begged he would not hazard one, leſt it fell into other hands, and thus prematurely diſcovered their connexion.

Whatever might be his wishes, Clement had now no alternative but to abide by her decision, nor any resource to charm his *ennui* except the frequent excursions he took in the beautiful environs of this then gay metropolis, though the season was not the most propitious for such jaunts. His evenings he spent at one or other of the Theatres; and thus the time, in his opinion, crept slowly on, without his either seeing or hearing from his wife, though he had been a month in Paris, and had daily, nay hourly, expected her for the last week. His valet had, like old William, been of necessity put into his confidence; the man therefore easily guessed some unforeseen circumstance had prevented his mistress from joining them:—his master's anxiety was evident; and at the expiration of another tedious week, which brought no tidings of his Maria, it became serious uneasiness.

As no explanatory letter accounted for so strange a delay, Clement was convinced some accident must have befallen her, and determined,
unable

unable any longer to bear his present anxious state of suspense, to set out in search of her; though, from her not having given him her route, there was a possibility she might be coming one road, while he travelled the other.

This reflection so far conquered his impatience, that he resolved to wait the event of another week, though every hour seemed an age. Mademoiselle Denesir might have wrote, admitting the Baroness was unable; and what but illness could occasion her silence and delay?

Such were his reflections, as he continually paced his saloon, listening, with trembling eagerness, for the welcome sound of his wife's travelling equipage; but more than three weeks having now elapsed since, according to her own appointment, she had taught him to expect her, he set out for Lyons in a light cabriolet, leaving his valet in possession of his apartment to receive his mistress, if they

should miss each other upon the road, and to give her a letter, fully explaining the reasons of his present journey. An express was to follow him with the welcome news, admitting she did arrive during his absence. Without scarcely stopping for refreshment, and without once pulling off his clothes, Clement reached Lausanne; and though it was near midnight, he was so impatient and so angry, that he was half inclined to proceed, without stopping, to Grand-Pré.

Fatigue, however, and the lateness of the hour induced him to seek that repose he so much wanted, and had, for the last fortnight, courted in vain, giving strict orders to be called, should an express from Paris arrive during the night. His rest was not so agreeably interrupted, and he awoke between nine and ten the next morning, unrefreshed, and as much bewildered as ever in various conjectures. At Grand-Pré he should certainly gain some intelligence; thither therefore he resolved to bend his steps, giving orders for
a saddle-

a saddle-horse while he dressed and breakfasted; and as soon as it was ready, without once reflecting that his unexpected appearance might derange the plan his wife had concerted, he set out once more for this ancient castle. Though his feelings were very different to those he experienced during his first journey thither, yet he was very unwilling to blame the Baroness; still he hardly knew how to excuse her, not having informed him why she had been forced to postpone her journey; till he reflected, if she was, or had been ill, her friend had perhaps, contrary to her wishes, nay, even to her orders, purposely left him in so irksome a state of suspense. Should this consolatory conjecture prove true, their next meeting would amply repay him for all the bitter moments he had passed.

Thus he reasoned as he proceeded on his journey. It was a delightful frosty morning; he therefore rode pretty fast, though the agitation of his mind would have prevented him

from feeling cold, had he even been exposed to the rigour of a Russian winter. When he drew near the wall which surrounded the pleasure grounds, the turn of a corner discovered to him the exact spot where he had met with his accident; and the subsequent scenes all passed in instantaneous review before his mind's eye.

“ Shall I meet with the Baronefs ?” he mentally enquired. “ Surely illness alone must have detained her so contrary to her first intentions. Gracious God ! if she should be no more !”

The horrid idea brought a sort of cold dew upon his forehead ; he involuntarily stopped his horse at the very spot where he had before attempted to catch a glance of her face.

“ One moment may perhaps remove all my anxious doubts and dreadful surmises,” thought he, raising himself in his stirrups, as
before,

before, to take a view of the lawn ; and was very near springing upon the wall, and leaping down on the other side, upon perceiving an elegant female figure slowly advancing from the same shrubbery where he had first seen the Baroness. Was it his Maria ? She was caressing a small white puppy, which she put down upon the grass ; while the anxious Clement, holding by the wall to support himself (his horse being small), was alternately hoping it was, and fearing it was not, his wife. The dog ran towards the wall ; and as his mistress followed him, he soon distinguished a countenance as handsome, but not the one he most wished to see.

This lady was also much younger than the Baroness ; she might be a visiter, he thought. Her dress seemed English. More impatient than ever, he rode forwards, and into the back court. From the profound silence which reigned in the numerous offices, and on that side of the castle, he was tempted

to believe it was uninhabited. But then whence came the lady and her dog?

Dismounting, he advanced towards a door which led into the servants' hall. Upon knocking with the handle of his whip, a servant out of livery, and a total stranger, made his appearance, and enquired his business.

"I wish to see the Baroness, if she is at home, my friend?"

"The Baroness—what the Baroness de Grand-Pré, the late owner of this castle?"

"The same."

"Oh! then you are too late. Let me see, she has been gone six or seven weeks."

"So long?" cried the astonished Clement.

"That she has.—Why, we have been here a month."

"Then you are not the only inhabitant of the castle?"

"No, certainly; my master is an Englishman, and has a daughter."

"Can

“ Can I see your master ? ” enquired Davenport, putting a six livre piece into the man’s hand, determined to gain admittance, if possible. The bribe had its proper weight.

“ I will let my master know you are here.”

“ Do so ; tell him an intimate friend of Madame de Grand-Pré’s would esteem it a particular favour if he would allow him to make a few enquiries respecting that lady.”

“ I don’t think he knows any more about her than I do, for the matter of that ; but I will deliver your message : let me put your horse in the stable first.”

This being done, Clement followed him into the large hall, with which all the best apartments communicated.

“ Do you send in any name ? ”

“ I am quite a stranger to your master, therefore it is of no consequence ; merely tell him, which will be shorter, and more to the purpose, a friend of Madame de Grand-Pré’s wishes to see him.”

“ I shall

“ I shall remember that better than your other message. Wait here—I won’t be long,” and away went the prating fellow.

“ Left Grand-Pré these six weeks !” repeated Clement to himself; “ she must, in that case, have set out even before she dispatched the letter I received at Paris. She might well desire me not to answer it ;—but she probably made some stay at Lausanne ; she certainly did not leave Switzerland at that time.”

Wearied in forming endless unsatisfactory conjectures, he thought the five minutes he waited in the well-known hall as many ages. “ Who could this Englishman be ? How came he to have taken so large a house, with apparently so limited a suite of servants ;” as he had only seen the one who had opened the door, and was gone to announce his visit. At last the man returned.

“ My

"My master will be glad to see you, Sir ; please to walk this way."

"Pray what is his name ?" asked Clement.

"Maynard," opening the door of the same parlour into which Davenport had been carried the first time he was ever within the walls of this ancient mansion. The sofa upon which he had been laid, still stood at the upper end of the room ; and the scene recurred so forcibly to his memory, that he allowed Mr. Maynard, who had rose to receive him, full time to examine the handsomest set of features which had ever fallen under his observation.

The striking graceful elegance of his figure was not less noticed ; and, lastly, his dress, which bespoke him a countryman, convinced the stranger he was a man of fashion. As the past faded from the memory of Clement, he became sensible of the absence of mind he betrayed, to which he attributed the earnest gaze of Mr. Maynard, who, at the advanced age of sixty, bore evident marks of having been

been a very fine figure ; and at once apologized for his intrusion and late reverie, by placing them both very truly to the score of the late inhabitant of the castle.

Mr. Maynard requested him to take a seat, and dismissed the attending servant ; then, by way of leading to the object of his visit, said, “ You did not know the Baroness de Grand-Pré had left Switzerland, Sir, I think I understood my servant ? ”

“ I rather supposed she had, or was upon the point of so doing, Sir ; but can you direct me where to find her ? ”

“ I wish it was in my power to oblige you, Sir ; but I am totally unacquainted with the lady in question. Ill health drove me from England, and I learned ; through the medium of my banker at Lausanne, where I arrived about six weeks ago, that this castle was to be let, furnished as it stood. The situation pleased me ; I therefore immediately hired it for three years, and almost instantly removed to it. The late owner had left Switzerland before

before I arrived here ; I therefore never had the advantage of seeing her."

" I am afraid I shall appear impertinent, Sir ; but may I enquire of whom you took this house ?"

" Of a Mr. Monvel, late steward to the Grand-Pré family, who has himself hired it, with the adjacent land, for a term of years, of the gentleman who lately purchased it of the Baroness—a Mr. Dubois. As I was rather astonished so ancient a family seat should have been disposed of in such a hasty manner (a circumstance I learned from my banker), I expressed my surprise to Mr. Monvel, who informed me, in pursuance of her late father's wishes, that the young lady is gone to reside in Germany, as she is upon the point of marriage with a Nobleman of that country, who is averse to spending any part of his time in Switzerland."

" The very story she informed me she meant to circulate," thought Clement ; " but where can she be at this moment ? Upon her road

road to Paris, most likely; and I have been running from, instead of towards her. Had I waited a few days longer, no doubt this apparent mystery would have been elucidated; perhaps an express is now following me to Laufanne, which will terminate my anxiety."

During his guest's reverie, Mr. Maynard had rung the bell, and given orders for various refreshments to be brought in. Love, he presumed, had drawn his handsome countryman to the castle; and if he neither knew of the Baroneſs's departure nor intended marriage, his diſappointment but too well accounted for his abſence of mind. He now preſſed him to partake of what his hoſpitality induced him to offer. Clement had no appetite; but he drank a few glaſſes of wine. Though his mind was far more at eaſe than before he ſaw Mr. Maynard, as he now found the Baroneſs had certainly diſpoſed of her eſtates; and though he was convinced ſhe had merely reported that ſhe was going into Germany,

Germany, to mislead her father's friends, he thought it very possible she might have found it expedient to take a very different, and a much longer route than she had at first intended; when the idea that she was at Chamberry with their daughter darted across his mind, and he no longer doubted but either the child or herself had been ill, and resolved to proceed thither without delay.

He had been so much absorbed in these, and various other reflections, that he found himself again obliged to apologize to kind entertainer for his absence of mind, who replied, "He was afraid he had been unintentionally the herald of very bad tidings. He had heard the young Swissess was a very beautiful woman; perhaps——"

"You must very naturally, my dear Sir, from my behaviour," interrupted Clement, "have supposed me an unsuccessful lover; but believe me, I knew the Baroness was engaged before I entered the castle; nay, as I said at first, I rather thought she had left Switzerland.

Switzerland. A mistake, which has occurred, has left me in ignorance of her present residence, and induced me to intrude upon you. A clue has since presented itself to my imagination, by which I hope to be able to trace her ; I must therefore beg leave to wish you a good morning. Should I ever again visit Switzerland, I shall take the liberty of paying my respects at the Castle of Grand-Pré, as I shall ever gratefully remember the kind reception I have met with from its present inhabitant."

Mr. Maynard made a very polite answer, expressive of his wish to see him again ; and Clement, with renovated hopes, returned to Lausanne.

END OF VOL. I.

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